

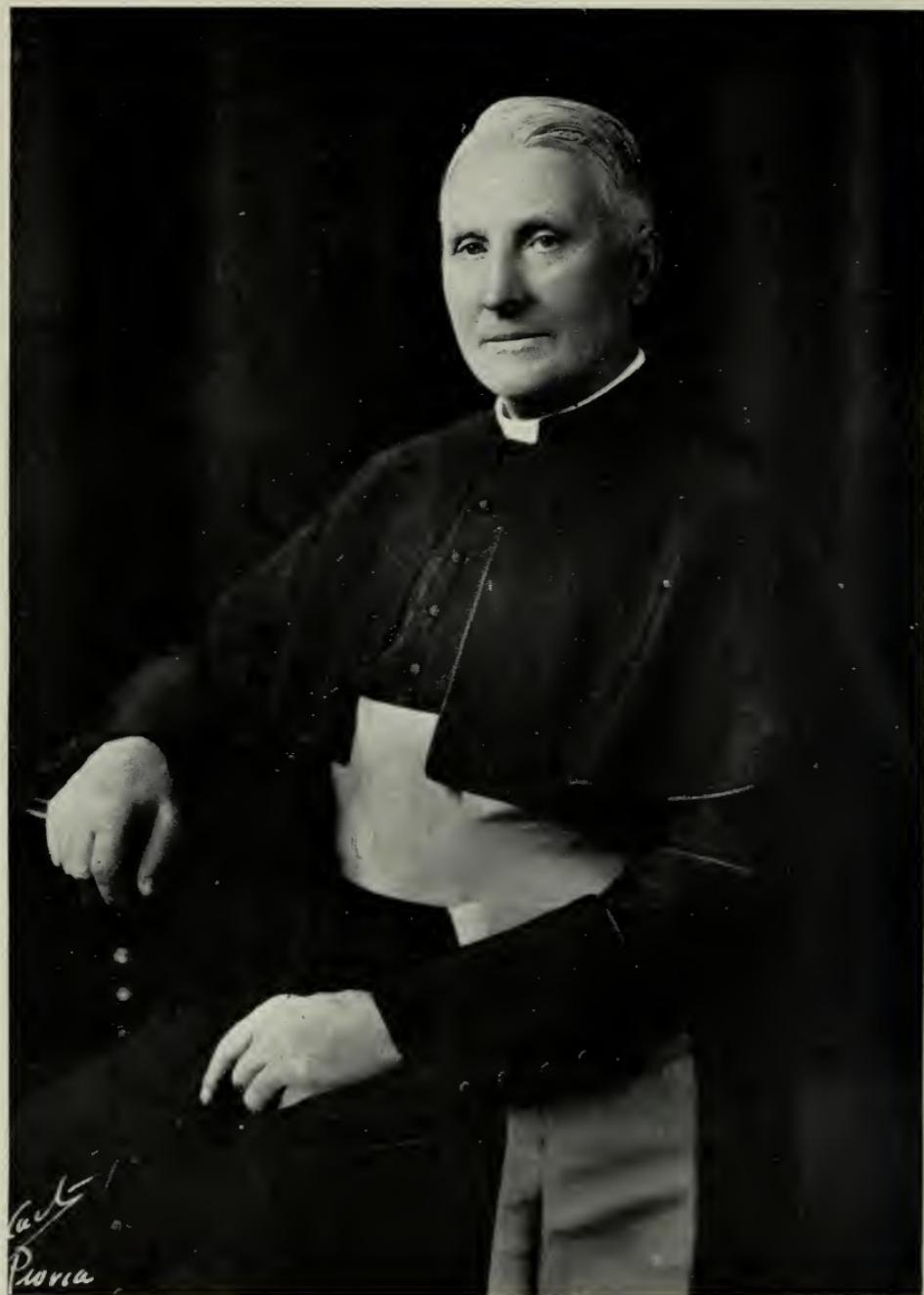
FIFTY GOLDEN YEARS

NÉLLE C. DONOVAN

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Right Reverend Monsignor John J. Burke, P.P.

FIFTY GOLDEN YEARS
IN
CENTRAL ILLINOIS

AN EPIC IN PURPLE

BY
NELLE C. DONOVAN

New York
THE PAULIST PRESS
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*Non Nobis Domine, Non Nobis, Sed Nomini
Tuo da Gloriam*

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DEDICATION

TO MONSIGNOR JOHN J. BURKE

—JUBILARIAN—

IN GRATITUDE

FOR: THE MANY YEARS SO UNSELFISHLY SPENT IN THE
SERVICE OF ST. MARK'S PARISH.

FOR: THE CAREFUL SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE OF MY THREE
CHILDREN DURING THEIR SCHOOL DAYS AT
ST. MARK'S SCHOOL.

—BY THE AUTHOR.

Nihil Obstat:

ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D.,
Censor Librorum.

Imprimatur:

† PATRICK CARDINAL HAYES,
Archbishop of New York.

New York, June 7, 1935.

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PREFACE

THE hopes and success of the Church rest greatly in the long run on its faithful parish priests. Without them, Popes, Cardinals, and Bishops, however zealous, learned, able, and holy, can do but little for God's glory or for the good of men. They may plan wisely, may exhort eloquently, may direct and govern prudently, may have indeed in both head and heart, as they should, solicitude for all the churches, yet after all it is the parish priest who bears the brunt of the battle for good against evil, for truth against error, for virtues against vice.

He is the Church's contact man with individual souls. It is he who wrestles directly with the problems involved in the building and maintaining both church and school; who instructs the ignorant, strengthens the weak, raises the fallen, goes in search of the lost, rebukes the forward, warns the reckless, inspires the good and faithful, who in a word, keeps alive and bright the fires of faith, hope, and charity.

A grateful recognition of this truth has prompted the writing of this little book: *Fifty Golden Years in Illinois*. It is a biographical sketch of Monsignor John J. Burke, who for

fifty years has been a parish priest in his native State. Through them all he has labored steadily and successfully as a "good soldier of Christ Jesus," obeying as meant for himself the injunction of Paul to Timothy: "Preach the word; be instant, in season, out of season; reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine," becoming thereby truly a "man of God," and a "workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

His example has always been encouraging and helpful to his brother priests. May this little book prolong the memory of his priestly life and character to the advantage of those who will take up their tasks, and carry on their work when they shall have entered into their reward.

JOHN B. HARNEY, C.S.P.,

*Superior General,
Congregation of St. Paul.*

*New York City,
February 24, 1935.*

FIFTY GOLDEN YEARS

CHAPTER I

AN EPIC IN PURPLE

THERE is no doubt that the longer a priest lives the more deeply does he feel the magnitude of his duties and the inadequacy of the instrument selected in their performance. His duties are sublime, his position one of honor. He is in constant need of supernatural aid to carry on his work. Without this help from above he cannot be a patient, kind, zealous, sincere, and humble follower of the Master. Every year's daily meditation, celebration of Holy Mass, and praying of the Breviary convinces him of this fact.

Fifty years a priest! What a great and glorious privilege! The Golden Jubilee of anyone, especially of any priest, is an important epoch in his life. What changes have taken place in the world, in the Church, in Central Illinois in the last half century.

Fifty years in Central Illinois! What a cluster of sad, solemn, and sacred recollections these words present to us for our consideration. They are recollections of the trials and triumphs of early pioneer times, of the failures and successes of succeeding years, and of the disappointments and consolations of declining days.

Few realize the trials and hardships of priests of fifty years ago in most of the parishes of Central Illinois. They were trials and hardships similar to those endured by priests in Missionary countries and in some of the Missions in the South and Western States in our own country.

We are confident that notwithstanding his trials and sacrifices, his failures and successes, the fifty years of his priesthood have been years of comfort and consolation for the jubilarian. This could not be otherwise for one who has always tried to do his duty and to be satisfied in whatever position he was placed. His motto has always been: "Do your duty; that is best, leave unto the Lord the rest."

It is a fact too often overlooked that one's failures test his courage and his problems prove his worth.

Since 1931 when the jubilarian was given the title of Monsignor by Pope Pius XI at the request of his Bishop, the Most Reverend Joseph H. Schlarman, he has been to many of us "An Epic in Purple."

CHAPTER II

CENTRAL ILLINOIS—RICH IN CATHOLIC HISTORY

CENTRAL ILLINOIS is rich in the history of Catholic enterprise and Catholic heroism. Interest in the history of this region begins with the coming of Father Marquette, the first white man who traversed the hills and dales of the Mississippi and Illinois valleys. The interesting and inspiring career of Father Marquette began in 1668 when he joined Fathers Allouez, Dablon and other missionaries in converting the Indians around Sault Sainte Marie, La Pointe and other places around Lake Superior. Five years afterward on the 17th of May, 1673, with Joliet and five other Frenchmen, Marquette started on his great mission of discovery and conversion. Entering Green Bay from Lake Michigan he crossed the Bay to the mouth of the Fox River; up the Fox carrying the boats across the portage to the Wisconsin and going down that stream they came to its mouth in the Mississippi on the 17th of June, 1673.

The great missionary with his party of aids and discoverers continued down the Mississippi passing the Illinois, Missouri and the Ohio until

they reached the mouth of the Arkansas and satisfied themselves that the Mississippi flowed into the Gulf of Mexico.

They decided to return and when they arrived at the Illinois they rowed up that stream, stopping at the present site of Peoria, Ill. While they rested a short time, Marquette, who was an able linguist, had already learned several dialects of the Indians, began instructing them and baptizing their children. Father Marquette was the first white man to reach the site of Peoria, the first missionary to preach the truths of salvation in Central Illinois.

Continuing their journey, Marquette and his companions rested for awhile near the present city of Utica, Ill., instructing the Indians, and he promised to return the following year. The year following he did return; after preaching for some time he celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and administered the Holy Sacraments of Baptism, Extreme Unction, Matrimony and Holy Eucharist.

As a result of Father Marquette's expedition, Canada and Europe received a geographical and historical knowledge hitherto unknown, and a missionary as well as a colonizing impulse was awakened.

There is no more beautiful page in the his-

tory of Christianity than that recording the labors and sacrifices of Father Marquette and other missionaries in North America and in Central Illinois.

Not far from where the city of Peoria now stands surrounded by all that adorns and beautifies civilized life, that saintly man and other self-sacrificing fellow laborers, who had left the luxuries of Europe for the forests and swamps of America, preached the Gospel to the Aborigines and endured untold hardships two centuries before we were born.

Father Marquette preached the first sermon, did the first missionary work, baptized the first child, made the first converts, and celebrated the first Mass in Central Illinois. He has written beautifully of the picturesqueness and fertility of the soil of Central Illinois.

In 1680, La Salle, Tonti, and the Franciscan Fathers, Hennepin, Membre and Ribourde, came to Peoria and built Fort Creve Coeur.

No matter what religion one may profess, he cannot but admire the zeal for religion and the loyalty to king and country of those men who made such sacrifices for God and humanity.

Many of the works of Father Marquette and other great and good men of his time disappeared with the Indians, but enough remains to impress

upon our minds that it was Father Marquette who made Peoria and Central Illinois immortal by his heroic deeds and his zealous missionary labors.

During the century succeeding Père Marquette's labors, the progress was slow. Up to 1800, Central Illinois as well as the Northwest Territory, was under the Episcopal jurisdiction of Baltimore. Afterwards it passed in succession under that of Bardstown, Vincennes, St. Louis and Chicago.

In 1877 the Diocese of Peoria was formed and Bishop John Lancaster Spalding became the first Bishop of Central Illinois. Bishop Spalding laid the groundwork of the Peoria Diocese and was the highest ecclesiastical and civic authority for one-third of a century from 1877 to 1908.

His administration was important because it was a formative period, because he found it unorganized and left it one of the best organized dioceses in the country.

Because of his eloquence, his sterling character, his intellectual superiority, his democratic ways and his loyalty to God and country, he made a great impression on all classes and creeds.

Bishop Spalding was succeeded by Bishop Edmund M. Dunne, who occupied the See of Peoria from 1909 to 1929, and by Bishop Joseph

H. Schlarman, who was consecrated in 1930. Both of these Bishops continued and are continuing the good work of the Founder of the Diocese, and the Church in Central Illinois continues to grow in numbers, influence and in sowing the good seed of the love of God and humanity.

CHAPTER III

THE JUBILARIAN'S CHILDHOOD

AFTER the War in 1775 there is not recorded a year in the history of our country when some Sons of Erin did not land on our fair shores. Some sought fame, others fortune, and yet again there were those who came for the love of adventure. They have assumed their share of the burdens of this country by adoption and have acquitted themselves well. We are safe in saying that the most of these immigrants possessed this mutual characteristic, the love and fealty to the religion of their forefathers, the Catholic Faith.

Among the many who came were two with whom we are concerned, Thomas Burke and Catherine O'Leary.

Thomas Burke was born in the year 1822, Tipperary County, Ireland, of Irish parentage. He was one of seven children. In stature he measured almost six feet. His robust health was evidenced by his ruddy complexion. His eyes were deep blue and wore a look of serious determination. Gentleness of nature attended him all his life. At an early age he evinced an aptitude at handling horses. Urged by his family, the

young lad learned to be a blacksmith. This trade he followed till his death. In fact it was an injury received years later, while shoeing a frenzied horse, that was directly responsible for his demise.

At the age of twenty-six years, in company with some friends, he sailed for the United States. The date of sailing was in February, 1848.

Catherine O'Leary first saw the light of day in June, 1830, at Limerick, Ireland. Typical colleen was she, dark locks and olive skin, livened by the expression from bright blue eyes. She was short and plump and so she remained through the years. Capable and courageous, she bade farewell to her family, and joined the already goodly number of representatives of the Emerald Isle in the United States in June, 1848. This year is related in Irish history as the Famine Year.

Thomas Burke and Catherine O'Leary met in New York. Kind providence had ordained it to be so. The love of the new country and the happy memories of the land they left behind formed the basis of their friendship that developed rapidly. We know little of their courtship, but you may be quite sure that it was romantic. Children of Ireland are light hearted, clean living, God fearing people. Could you find more fertile soil for romanticism of soul? Imbued with the attributes commendable for the es-

tablishment of a true Christian home, they were married in New York City, the year 1850. They lived a short while in that city and a very short while in the State of Maine, finally moving to a small town in Illinois, Avon, in Fulton County.

To this estimable union were born nine children: Mary, Thomas, John J., Patrick, Sarah, and four who died in infancy. Six weeks after the birth of John, the third child, Thomas Burke moved his family to St. Augustine, another small town, four miles north of Avon, in Knox County. Mary and Patrick have passed to their Eternal Reward. Sarah, lovingly called "Sadie," lives with her brother, the Right Reverend Monsignor John J. Burke, in Peoria. A descendant of Thomas, the eldest son, is Dr. Thomas Burke, of Chicago, Ill., a sturdy branch on the family tree. He has five husky children to carry on the family name. The one destined to work in the Vineyard of the Lord was John J. With proper apology to the rest of the immediate family, let us continue the discourse from here about our beloved Monsignor, the pastor of St. Mark's Parish in Peoria, Ill.

John James Burke is his full name received at baptism, which occurred a few weeks after his birth at Avon, Ill., January 4, 1857. The venerable priest, the Reverend Father Fitzpatrick, who

performed the ceremonies attendant to administering the cleansing Sacrament, has long since passed to his Just Reward. For each frail bit of humanity that received the Saving Waters at his hands, he asked a benediction. He begged for the Divine Call to reach some of these charges that fell to his care. He hoped that they might supplement the work so handsomely done by the peerless priests of our pioneer times. The country at this time needed sturdy, earnest churchmen. The work of a priest in this day, 1857, was lightened little, when we muse by way of contrast, say, one hundred years back. However arduous were his tasks in attending the outmission at St. Augustine, to him goes the palm for the spiritual beginning of a long life spent by John J. Burke in the Service of the King.

"The education of the youth is the hope of the Nation"—the old phrase grows in significance with time. Christian parents realize that true education can only be accomplished when the heart and mind are both trained. Religion, cause and effect, is taught today in our splendid parochial school system. Years ago, however, children did not have the advantages of such intensive training. The knowledge of Christ, His Works and Sufferings, were largely left to the parents and priests, and in isolated areas the visits

of the priests were far between. Often they were a year apart. Travel was hard and churches were scattered. Is it not singular, then, that in this day of ample opportunity to know and love our Holy Religion, we do not see the burning zeal, the ardor that made the Catholics of half a century ago stand out as shining examples of Christianity. Although the public schools did not embrace a course of study in Catholic Doctrine, it does not follow that the many splendid teachers neglected the teaching of God and His Bounty. Within their limitations these God-fearing men and women imbued their young charges with a love for the Golden Rule. We would be foolish to assume that such salutary influence was lost. However, we recognize the distinct advantage that the child of today enjoys, who learns of doctrine, laws, ceremonies and ceremonials. He learns intimately, to know and feel the close pulse of his religion; that religion so fraught with meaning to them, who by their allegiance may truthfully claim a direct line of succession from Christ Himself to our present-day Pontiff.

Such an advantage did not come to John Burke until later in his life. It was not until he entered Notre Dame in 1879 that he experienced the benefits of Catholic schooling. In the fall of 1863 he joined the ranks of barefoot, overall-clad

boys, attending the village school at St. Augustine. The old house that served the purpose remained standing till a few years ago, when it was destroyed by fire. Unique indeed was this first school. Pine planks for seats—knotty pine planks that afforded an excellent opportunity for fun if the teacher was not looking. It was told with some enthusiasm (the measure of truthfulness cannot be vouched for) that Johnny Burke caught his big toe in a pine knot as often as the rest of the lads. He was fortunate, however, in being spared a public reprimand.

Bob Mattingly, son of August Mattingly, one of the first white settlers in Illinois and founder of St. Augustine, was the schoolmaster. This family distinction in itself created an aura about him that commanded respect and loyalty. He used the colorful history of our great State of Illinois as background for many a stirring tale. Stories of exciting situations, though a bit exaggerated, were corroborated by the fond parents at the rehearsal by the family fireside. First-hand examples are always more persuasive than a textbook in instilling sound principles. Bob Mattingly employed them as often as he could and as a result he made a fair disciplinarian. This reactionary occurrence, which we shall relate, proves that the discipline was not too idealistic.

It shows that even at an early age, John Burke had the courage of his convictions. Right meant everything to him, still he kept his mind open and accepted his share of blame, but, be it noted, just the proper measure of blame. Being a tall boy for his age, John Burke was usually placed in the rear of the schoolroom. Near him was seated a boy that appeared to be often a "fly in the ointment!" This offender produced what our 1935 youths call a "raspberry" or a "Bronx Cheer." The teacher accused John Burke, who promptly denied the accusation, but Mr. Mattingly was adamant. He ordered Burke to stay after school. Naturally of an aggressive type, John resented the false stigma, and when the class filed out at the closing hour, he filed out with them. At the door he was stopped and escorted back to his seat. When the explanation time came he stood his ground and convinced the teacher that he was not the perpetrator of the disturbance. He was sure of a hasty exit now, but it was not to be so easy. He was commanded to hold out his hands and a sting-swift stroking treatment was administered to his upheld palms with a slim, sleek ruler. "Now my young man," said the pedagogue, "I believe that you are innocent about the noise, but you are being punished for disobedience; I told you to remain in this

room." Monsignor said, recalling the incident, "He was right. I got it, but I deserved it. As a rule constituted authority is right, though at times right only in the way they administer."

The school years raced on with amazing swiftness. John Burke is now eleven years old.

When Sarah, the youngest child, was eight weeks old, the father, Thomas Burke, sickened and died. The injury suffered a few years before at the hands of his chosen work caused an infection that claimed his life in his forty-sixth year. We can conjure to mind what must have been his natural feelings. His concern for the young mother left with a lively quintet to raise alone. The brave little woman managed splendidly. Soon the boys were able to shoulder hard work, so she wisely moved to a farm near St. Augustine, Ill. She hoped that by so doing she might impress upon her sons and daughters the moral principles so often the heritage of those who draw their living from the churlish soil. Strength of body, firm purpose, iron will and no sense of discouragement. What greater assets could a man possess? So Catherine Burke reasoned.

The move to the farm meant a long walk for a thirteen-year-old boy, since he continued to attend the village school in St. Augustine. John Burke learned the joy of a good brisk walk then,

and he has continued the practice on through his life. Today, he can be seen taking his daily constitutional, walking with alacrity down Union Hill in Peoria. He staunchly advocates walking for health.

As the seasons came and went the sports changed. For the summer months, swimming was one of the chief diversions. It was not indulged in at a finely appointed private or municipal pool that our modern youths have come to believe a necessity.

Cedar Creek is a very crooked stream that flows in and out of the country near St. Augustine, till it empties into the Spoon River, not far from London Mills. One favorite location for swimmers was a bend in Cedar Creek called the Sheep Hole. It derived its name from the general utility of the spot. The sheep were driven here to be washed before being sheared. It was a dangerous place with step-offs and whirlpools. Great were the warnings given to the children regarding the rendezvous; despite this fact it still remained a sacred spot to the swimmers.

One fine June morning a bevy of boys, Johnny Burke among them, without the proper consent, went to the Creek to swim. Suddenly one of their number sank from sight. Panic-stricken, his companions tried to rescue him, but

in vain. Gus Jennings did not come back with the crowd. It was several hours before his body was recovered. From then on the youthful enthusiasm was damped and the parental objections strengthened. Monsignor Burke feels sure that two sisters of this victim of the unfortunate coincidence still live in St. Augustine. They may be pleased to know that one who lives so close to God prayerfully remembers their lamented brother. The good Monsignor recalled this incident that was used to lend color to his early school days.

Cedar Creek was also the scene of the winter sports. The youngsters could skate for miles on the frozen surface. Often endurance runs were staged. Strenuous work had developed many fine physiques among the lads, so that they were well matched for such tests. One exceptionally cold day John Burke promoted a race to the Sheep Hole from two miles southeast of St. Augustine. They had skated several miles when the howling of wolves was heard in the distance. The boys were terrorized. They skated in and out of the coves faster than they had ever done before. On returning home they declared that they had covered twenty miles. There was no mention of the winner. The next day John Burke's feet were so swollen he could not wear

shoes, and he was stiff and sore and found that he had difficulty in walking. Exercise might have been necessary to limber up his muscles after this youthful experience, but John Burke has not needed such limbering treatment to his actions with the beatitudes.

Wolves were a great menace in those days, though they were seldom known to attack a person in daylight, for this reason a stretch of timber lying a mile and one-half west of St. Augustine was a spot to be feared at night. A farmer from the vicinity of this timberland visited the distillery at St. Augustine. Near dusk he prepared to go home. He was laden from within of Knox County corn in liquid form and without he carried two gallon jugs of whisky that he purchased at the bargain price of twenty-five cents a gallon. In this fine fettle he approached the timber. It was moonlight and he could readily see the way. With a sudden rush he was attacked by a pack of wolves. The seriousness of the situation sobered him immediately. Deftly he used the only weapons at his command—the stone jugs of whisky. Swiftly and with deadly aim he swung the cumbersome jugs to right and left. When he left the grove he had felled the most of the snarling pack and had scattered the rest, but the brown, stone jugs and contents re-

mained intact. Disheveled and dejected the farmer proceeded home much the worse for the encounter.

The faith of our early ancestors, who practiced their religion against many odds, need no excelsior of mere words for inspiration to the generations that follow. We approach records of their thoughts and deeds with an ever-increasing sense of awe. Those in the outmissions, between the visits of the priests, employed means of meeting moral and religious issues, that we are harking back to today with our guilds and study clubs. In St. Augustine, groups met at the Burke home to hear Johnny Burke read aloud. He had been assigned to this task almost as soon as he was able to do so.

The Boston Pilot was a Catholic newspaper edited by a Boston layman, Patrick Donahoe. It enjoyed a wide circulation, particularly for a weekly publication. Everything of Catholic interest that could be obtained in the way of news was printed in the *Pilot*. The foreign column with the news of Ireland was read and reread to the eager band around the fireplace. Many of these men and women could not read. In performing this duty, no doubt John Burke considered it a corporal work of mercy. However, he has been quoted as saying, that this paper was

universally the biggest factor in keeping alive the Catholic Faith among the early settlers.

Religion and politics have always been subjects for argumentation and debate. American History, whose parallel in trying times we shall never see, was being written in deeds of color, light and dark, during the years of John Burke's young boyhood. The greatness of Lincoln, the newly formed Republican Party, and Abolition were subjects too widely discussed not to register on alert young minds.

There was a certain gentleman, Clement L. Vallandingham, lawyer and editor from the State of Ohio, prominent at this time. Being a forceful orator with a flair for politics, he was elected to Congress before the outbreak of the Civil War. He was termed a leader of the Copperheads, a political faction, organized primarily by those in the North, who sympathized with the Southern Cause. Vallandingham wished to subjugate the Secessionists, and he was firmly against war and its machinations. So stirring were his speeches along this line that he was arrested for treason and sentenced to prison. In a very short while he was pardoned by Lincoln, who already had acquired a reputation for such leniencies. Prior to these strenuous experiences, Vallandingham had been stumping the country for Stephen A. Doug-

las, Springfield, Ill., nominee of the Northern Democrats for President of the United States. shortly afterward while campaigning in his own behalf as candidate for Governor of the State of Ohio, he came to Illinois to help the Democrats. One of his schedules called for a talk at Galesburg, Ill. Quite a delegation of St. Augustine residents had gone up to Galesburg to hear the speech. Feeling ran high at this time and a mention of your partisan inclinations often was a signal for a battle of more than words. When the evening train brought the travelers home, an enthusiastic crowd greeted them on the depot platform, eager to hear of the trip. Some one in the aggregation, for the sensational effect that it would produce, shouted "Hurrah for Vallandingham, the Democrat." It was the spark that set off the fireworks, and a free-for-all followed. John Burke had accompanied a relative to the depot; he had heard of such demonstrations but had never before witnessed thirty or forty men pommeling one another. He made a hasty retreat and on arriving home he found one of the pseudopugilists who had engaged in the fracas there before him. The high spirited fellow had an ugly gash across his scalp. Mrs. Burke tried to aid the wounded man but he promptly refused the kind offer; walking to the salt box, he pro-

cured a liberal helping which he applied to the open wound with a gusto. After a few gyrations, he quieted down enough to relate his version of the squabble. At the point in the story for the "Hurrah," he forgot the wound and sallied forth again to the scene of the conflict.

The youths of those days were the silent audience to many such incidents; however, instead of developing the grosser instincts in their make-up, it had a tendency to convince them that the body with an extra energy and power of endurance could carry out anything that the shrewd mind might plan along constructive lines.

George Oldfather had succeeded Mr. Mattingly as the village schoolmaster. Under his tutelage, John Burke completed his grade school work. Later Mr. Oldfather was elected Superintendent of Schools for Knox County. After leaving St. Augustine he engaged in ministerial endeavors and was finally elected Superintendent of Public Instruction at Winnetka, Ill. Shortly before his death in 1932, he visited his former pupil, at Peoria, who had lately received honors from Rome.

When school closed in June, 1873, John had formed decided ideas as to how he would organize his course. These definite ambitions were drafted along teaching lines. The object of his

interest at this time was a school located in a district known as Goose Neck. A less courageous young man would have flinched at such ideas in lieu of the treatment accorded the former teacher. The poor fellow had been ridden on a rail out of the district with a stern admonition not to come back. The general sentiment was strongly prejudiced against Catholics. However, with such odds against him the ambitious John presented his credentials to the district board and was accepted. He was hired to teach Goose Neck school for one term, the first Catholic to be assigned to the district teaching staffs.

September found John Burke ready to assume his new duties. Scanning the roster of pupils he found that the ages varied from eight to twenty-one years. Reflecting thoughtfully on this fact and the sad plight of the former director he realized that the first day must show the command that he possessed. When the formalities of the opening days were over, the class had been given the rules that must be obeyed and a positive assurance that as their teacher, John Burke was an authority not to be fooled with. He joined them in their games and excelled at them as often as he could, with the idea in his mind of commanding their respect. As the months wore on he won their confidence, so that there was little need for

drastic measures. He was called upon very little for combative treatment.

In the anxiety to build up the hero, step by step, the writer often fails to bring out the one quality which contributed most to his success. From the very beginning, John Burke possessed a very definite mastery in his handling of men. He has never lost this prerogative. One of Lincoln's biographers, in speaking of Lincoln's singular success in mastering men, gives four contributing factors, courage, force, devotion and tact. Burke's country school problems were analogous to Lincoln's backwoods difficulties. He used the same plus factors in surmounting his concomitants at Goose Neck. It took courage at his age to accept a school of thirty children, most of them older and more robust than himself. Force was needed to issue and maintain orders; but he won their admiration by his good fellowship and devotion to their cause and the fact that he was hired for a second term with an advance in salary, was proof of the tact that he used, for seldom was the same teacher wanted in that school for two succeeding terms.

Monsignor Burke has not forgotten the scene of his early teaching activities. He attends the annual Fall Festival held at St. Augustine, each year, to renew acquaintance with those who are

still living and to keep in touch with the descendants of those who are gone. In August, 1934, it was his pleasure to meet Mrs. Albert Hagen who as Kate O'Prey had attended one of the schools he taught. She makes her home near St. Augustine, surrounded with her large family, now grown. She has raised eleven children, among them twin girls and three other daughters, who became Dominican nuns at the Mound in Wisconsin.

Before continuing his education, John Burke taught two other district schools near St. Augustine. These first years of his pedagogy were indicative of his future career. His characteristics have not changed, and he has remained through his long life a master teacher of men.

The taste of worldly remuneration earned through his teaching did not turn his thoughts away from his desire for further education, and he entered Abingdon College at Abingdon, Ill. There were two colleges in Abingdon; Heading, a Methodist school, and Abingdon, a Campbellite (now Christian) institution. There existed quite a little rivalry between the two, since in that small town there was hardly justifiable support for both colleges.

Mr. Samuel Perkee, a tall, squarely-built gentleman, was the president of Abingdon. Be-

sides presiding at the head of the school, he taught Ancient and Modern History. Because of the bigotry of the times, the texts used were usually that of a biased historian. History classes sixty years ago must have been trying sessions to the Catholic student in a Protestant college. Open discussion was welcomed in the classroom and untrue statements were frequently given. John Burke instinctively felt the insulting, libelous citations given by his fellow students in these class discussions. Often their questions unarmed him, but he promptly let it be known that he would consult an impartial historian's version and the next class would find him prepared to give the correct reference as to Catholic doctrine.

There was a rule at the college that a portion of each morning was given to Protestant services held in the Chapel. Burke refused to attend these services. He was reprimanded by the President and a heated argument followed. Burke declared himself loathe to be so hypocritical as to participate in these services, since he was professedly a Roman Catholic. The ultimatum was issued that he either attend the services or be dropped from classes. "Very well, then, Mr. Perkee, I shall quit," said Burke. This decision caused no little comment on the campus.

The irate Mr. Perkee began to mull over the probability of Burke's registering at the rival college, and since tuition meant a great deal to Abingdon, he altered his verdict and allowed John Burke to report for all classes except the Chapel services. From that time on during his stay at Abingdon College, Burke was called upon to give the correct version of Catholic beliefs if the discussion warranted a decision. He soon became recognized for his loyalty to his religion and the religion became respected in those parts because of him.

When he was not enrolled in college, John Burke engaged in relief teaching, keeping in mind what was dear to his heart, the thought of a higher college education.

CHAPTER IV

AT NOTRE DAME

NOTRE DAME, a Catholic college for men conducted by the Holy Cross Order, is located in South Bend, Ind. In the year 1879, the campus could not boast the many modern buildings that now grace the trim green lawns. It was strictly a boarding school; one large building for the students, a church and rectory. The enrollment of one hundred and fifty students were scaled from gradesters to seminarians.

The founder, Reverend Father Edward Soren, was the first President. He had traveled as far as New York on the first leg of a journey that was to take him abroad, when fire of an unknown origin caused a severe loss to his beloved Notre Dame. When the wire reached him, apprising of the catastrophe, he immediately returned to South Bend and actively engaged in the work of reconstruction. His first move was to organize corps of workers among the student and teaching bodies. They engaged in the cleaning of bricks and clearing away of débris. Loyal graduates near and far took up the task of soliciting funds for rebuilding. The active students formed groups to lecture and carry on the class work.

This combined effort drew no small amount of attention to Notre Dame. We may say that, disheartening as was the loss by fire, it had its compensations, for this was practically the first national publicity received by Notre Dame.

In the early fall of 1879 following the fire, John Burke entered Notre Dame. There were no private rooms with elegant appointments, the boast of our present-day colleges. The young men were quartered in dormitories.

The teaching staff included names familiar as splendid educators. Reverend Father Thomas E. Walsh, of sterling worth, highly educated and possessed of executive ability, was a decided asset to the institution. He could substitute with perfect ease in any subject on the absence of the regular instructor. The Reverend Father William Corby was the President of Notre Dame at that time, succeeding Reverend Father Doren. The history of his life is a colorful one. Having served as Chaplain in the Civil War under General McClellan, he manifested a deep interest in organizing the Grand Army of the Republic. It was mostly through Father Corby's efforts that the world learned of the patriotism, during the Civil War, of many of the good priests and Sisters associated with Notre Dame. Before the birth of St. Mary's, a college for girls near Notre

Dame, the nuns were in charge of the hospital and the domestic duties of the former institution.

The very young students were called minims. These youthful charges were prepared for Holy Communion and Confirmation by the collegians. Fresh from teaching the district schools, John Burke's ability was readily recognized and it fell to his lot to instruct a group of minims his last year in school at Notre Dame. In this class was Ben F. Lindsey, a bright, sincere little chap who later entered a non-Catholic school and fell away from the Church. He will be remembered coming into national prominence as Judge of the Juvenile Court in Denver, Colo., where he presided for many years. Another member of this class was William McFee of McFee & McGinity, Denver millionaire lumber corporation.

After this good work as catechist, Burke was assigned to the preparation of questions for semester examinations, then the correction and grading of papers.

At the age of twenty-five he began the study of theology. From 1882 to 1883 this work was taken at Notre Dame. He received a B.A. degree at this institution in June, 1883.

CHAPTER V

SEMINARY DAYS

AFTER leaving Notre Dame, there was no room for conjecture in the mind of John Burke as to his vocation in life. For some time he had been debating with himself, but had taken no one into his confidence. His mother had not shared his secret, lest in his failure to qualify for so high a calling he would bring to her, sorrow. He made an appointment late in the summer with Bishop Spalding of Peoria, Ill., and talked over the matter with that eminent churchman, who would become his superior after ordination.

The choice of a theological seminary was made in favor of St. Francis at Milwaukee. For years this institution had been drawing the greater number of enrolled students from among the States of the Northwest; later with the building of seminaries at Collegeville, Minn., St. Louis, Mo., Mundelein, near Chicago, Ill., and others, St. Francis became the favorite for the locality immediately around Milwaukee, Wis.

In the fall of 1883, Burke entered St. Francis Seminary and assiduously pursued the routine of seminary life. He had decided to make the time fruitful and his subsequent ministry is am-

ple proof of its efficacy. Each student had a private room, but they were of a primitive nature. Besides the single bed, chair, table and lamp, the only other convenience was the china bowl and pitcher. During the severe winter weather one could depend on the water in the pitcher being frozen. Tonsorial duties had to be neglected. Personal hygiene had not resolved itself into as desirable a function as a "bath a day," stressed by our modern medics, otherwise it would have been a decidedly complex problem at St. Francis in 1883, for there was but one bath and toilet room on each floor. The heating of this large institution was likewise a real job. The sweep of the chilling "Northwesters" was keenly felt at the seminary.

One very cold night the young seminarian was huddled close to a radiator trying to be comfortable while studying Dogma — Scripture, Canon Law or whatever it may have been—when a guttural voice broke the stillness; frightened, the student turned to see a six-foot Indian standing in the doorway. Older fellow-classmates had prepared him for such a visit and Burke had discredited their tales; however, he was quickly treated to a proper demonstration of the Red Man's sagacity. The Government Reservation was quite a distance from Milwaukee and each

year some of the converted Indians would make visits to the seminary, begging for themselves and their less fortunate brothers. This incident occurred during a Christmas vacation that John remained at the seminary.

At St. Francis, as at Notre Dame, he drew attention to himself by his application to his work. His scholarly attitude merited the wholesome esteem and lasting friendship of his professors. Reverend Father Rainer, acting President of St. Francis during the time that Burke was in school, predicted a bright future for the seminarian from St. Augustine. He lived to see his prediction come true; at the time of his death, Father Burke was pastor at Bloomington, Ill., where he had established the new St. Patrick's Parish.

Some of his associates, like himself have received recognition from Rome in appreciation for their services: John Henry Tihen, whom Bishop Hennessey of Wichita appointed as Secretary and Chancellor of the diocese, was later consecrated Bishop of Lincoln. Later he was sent to the Denver See, where he remained till a little over a year ago, when he returned to Wichita, Kans., to retire and spend his last days in a convent at that place. Another classmate was August Schinner, who was consecrated First Bishop of Superior, Wis. Dear to the heart of John Burke was a

priest, now of holy memory, Dr. Zardetti. During 1883 to 1885 he was Professor of Theology at St. Francis. Assuming more than his share of work for one of frail health, he engaged Burke to assist him with the clerical duties of his office. Close contact at school cemented the growing friendship between them that was to last through the years, though the ocean was to separate them. Dr. Zardetti was consecrated Bishop of St. Cloud, Minn., in 1890. He found the attendant duties of that episcopacy too arduous for his failing health, so he resigned and sailed for Rome. After a year trying to recuperate, he was created an Archbishop, stationed at Bucharest. Within a short while his health again forced a vacation. Later on when we are accompanying John Burke on his first long trip abroad in 1901, we will again meet Archbishop Zardetti as Canon at St. Mary Major, in Rome.

Having completed the prescribed course at St. Francis, John Burke was ordained with thirty-two other young men by Archbishop Heiss of Milwaukee on June 29, 1885. The happy day had arrived, his life no longer belonged to himself. He had taken on the Armor of Christ. He returned to St. Augustine where he celebrated his first Mass on Saturday, the second day of July, 1885. Despite the fact that this was a

week day the little town came out *en masse* to attend the services and receive the blessing of one who had brought honor and grace to their humble village. Father John Burke has been the only native son of St. Augustine to receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

CHAPTER VI

ASSISTANT AT MONMOUTH AND KEWANEE

THE day following the celebration of his first Mass, Father John Burke was summoned to Peoria by the Most Reverend Bishop Spalding and assigned to relief work at St. Mary's Cathedral Parish. Many of the priests were on retreat and summer vacations, so among his first duties were the hearing of confessions. The presence of a strange confessor had the same reaction on the penitents in 1885 as it does today, he received the attention by way of numbers. This popularity was responsible for his failure to return to the Rectory till near midnight. Reverend Father Ben Spalding, brother of the Bishop, was his companion in work that night and noticing the lateness of the hour, jokingly advised the young priest in this vein: "After you have heard confessions for a year, you will know better than to give a sermon to each penitent."

The changes throughout the diocese were usually announced after the summer retreats. It was at this time that Father Burke was sent to Monmouth as assistant to Father Felix Duffy. He was hardly settled in his new home when Bishop Spalding ordered a collection to be taken

for the proposed building of a new Cathedral at Peoria. Father Duffy's goal was to be the largest collection for this cause outside the city of Peoria. This was indeed a hard goal to reach. He sent his new assistant to do the work of soliciting. Always willing to do his duty he deemed this a decided favor since it would acquaint him with the parishioners. The first soliciting was done in the outmissions of Alexis and Rariton. From the start he met with remarkable success. When the calls were made near Monmouth he met with one unexpected refusal. Mr. X., a farmer, whom God had blessed with prosperity, thought that his dollar bill in the Sunday collection box had covered his obligations and refused to give to the cause. Father Burke urged him to reconsider but he was obstinate, so the priest left him with a kindly admonition, "God has given and God could take away."

The August heat was intense, and with some satisfaction Father Burke announced that his assignment was completed. Late in the afternoon of the same day a storm of cyclonic force drove to shelter the pastor and his young assistant, who had been watching the approach from the porch of the Rectory. Soon word came to the pastor that the twister had spent its fury in the country outside of Monmouth, demolishing the home of

Mr. X. The torrential rains following the storm rendered it impossible for either priest to visit the stricken family for several days; finally Father Burke was able by riding a saddle horse to get to the scene of the devastation. Mr. X. greeted him as soon as he alighted in words and attitude of the pious old Job. When the final report of the collection was sent to Bishop Spalding, Monmouth had subscribed the largest amount outside of the city of Peoria, and Mr. X.'s name was on the list of contributors.

Thirteen months were spent in Monmouth when a change authorized by the good Bishop sent Father Burke to Kewanee, Ill., assistant in this instance to Reverend Edward McCartney. This parish had four outmissions, Wataga, Galva, Toulon and Woodhull, and the priest traveled sixty-five miles in this ambit. One Sunday would find Father Burke at Toulon and Galva, the next Sunday at Wataga and Woodhull. The trips through the winter were sometimes made by sleigh; the temperature remained at the zero mark much of the time and a slight moderation would bring the snow. Though one was dressed warmly and wrapped heavily with horsehide robes, a drive against the biting wind would be more than exhilarating. Often on arriving at the modest little church, the priest would find

that the sexton had not heated the building for the services. Monsignor Burke recalls the wine being frozen on more than one occasion.

On Christmas Day of that same year Father Burke made the visit to Wataga, the thermometer registered 15° below zero most of the day. When he arrived at his destination, the janitor was kindling the fire in the sacristy, the thought of heating the church was omitted since none of the congregation, save one, was on hand to hear Mass on account of the severe weather. The good priest celebrated the Holy Sacrifice at Wataga and within a few hours at Woodhull. Immediately afterwards, he started home to be with his mother for a holiday visit. No sooner had he arrived at home than his nose began to smart and pain; a few days later the outer layer of skin peeled off. He had frozen this member during his cold ride.

One winter and the following summer was the length of the assistance spent at Kewanee. During that time he reorganized the servers' corp and the children's sodality. The helpful experience that the young priest was gaining at this small parish was soon to be practically applied for the next change for him assigned him to a parish of his own.

CHAPTER VII

FIRST PARISHES AT KEITHSBURG AND CHEBANSE

FATHER BURKE was given his first pastorate in July, 1887, at Keithsburg, Ill. He succeeded Father Corley. This little town of 1,500 inhabitants, mostly non-Catholics, is located on the Mississippi River, 30 miles from Burlington, Iowa. Besides the village itself, the priest had to serve the missions at Viola and Preemption. For many years Keithsburg had been attended from Rock Island, Macomb and Monmouth; however, at that date Father Burke was the fifth resident pastor. According to a recent historian of the parish, during the two years that he was in Keithsburg he accomplished a great deal by way of creating interest and soliciting coöperation of the people. Father Burke was given the impression before going to this small parish, that the financial conditions were in a very poor state of affairs; on leaving, he remarked that he wished he might remain two years longer, for with a little encouragement the parish would make great progress.

Shortly after Father Burke took charge at Keithsburg, a seditious society known as the American Protective Association was formed in

the State of Iowa. They organized chapters at various places. Keithsburg was the first town in Illinois where meetings were held and these were attended with the utmost secrecy. The express purpose of the organization was the violent opposition to Catholicism. Father Burke had gained the respect of the community, regardless of creed. It was his wont to contribute articles for publication to the small weekly newspaper. When he learned that some of the prominent merchants were attending the A. P. A. meetings he prepared to do a little detective work for the moral good of the village. Father Burke interested a parishioner who without fear of being questioned attended one of the meetings. He reported to the good priest the names of the citizens of Keithsburg who were present at the get-together. Father Burke sent a well-worded account of this meeting to the local paper, stating that the secret was out, that the nature of the society was known and a list of names of those participating in the movements of that society would be published if the anti-Catholic meetings persisted. The unprincipled attack on Religion, and the secretive, unstable organization of the clique, was reason enough for the more intelligent citizens not to be associated with the society; however, Father Burke's interest was also a factor

to warrant the matter being dropped. A non-Catholic merchant friend came to the good Father and begged that he refrain from a publication of the list on promise that he would use his influence for the suppression of the Association. He kept his word, the meetings were no more, the list was not made public and Father Burke was the recipient of a fine new silk hat, a gift of the grateful merchant.

While at Keithsburg, the zealous priest organized two parish societies that are still functioning. The Altar Society for ladies of the congregation and the Holy Angels Society for the children. The purpose of the latter group was to create an interest in the study of religion and a closer companionship between the pastor and the children. On Saturdays the various members of the Society could be seen on the church grounds doing something useful and instructive. They were compensated by fishing excursions, playing ball, croquet, or an indulgence in lemonade, oranges and other dainties that appeal to youth.

The second year of Father Burke's pastorate in Keithsburg he collected enough money to build a tower to the church and purchase a bell. Bishop Spalding blessed the bell on July 2, 1888, and on the same day he administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to fifty-seven children and twenty

adults. The fear of not being ready for the Holy Ghost obsessed a small boy in the class. He was mightily afraid to be questioned from the catechism by His Excellency the Bishop. The lad was told that the adults would not be put to the test so as soon as the questions began the child left his assigned place among the children and ensconced himself behind a friendly neighbor in the adult contingent. Bishop Spalding liked to relate this anecdote that happened at Keithsburg.

Upon Father Burke's removal in 1889, the parish and friends of Keithsburg held a large farewell party to wish him Godspeed and success in his new assignment.

Chebanse, Ill., was next to be benefited by the labors of this good man. It was then a small town of 400 people mostly of foreign extraction with a mission church at Clifton, five miles away. The usual parish duties occupied his time and the new pastor adjusted himself readily to his new flock. The year before he had accompanied some of his parishioners on a trip to Lake Minnetonka in Minnesota, at the same time paying his respects to Archbishop Ireland at St. Paul. Now he was ready for work and content to do his duty. There was little time aside from this for anything but writing and study.

During the time he was pastor at Chebanse

he built a church at Milk's Grove, a few miles west of Chebanse and Clifton. Now there is a pastor at Clifton who attends the outmission of Milk's Grove.



St. Patrick's Church
Bloomington—Illinois

CHAPTER VIII

FORMS THE NEW BLOOMINGTON PARISH, ST. PATRICK'S

IN 1892 Bishop Spalding decided to divide Holy Trinity, the largest parish in the diocese, and form the new St. Patrick's. This idea had been suggested nine years before, but the movement was looked on with apprehension. Father Weldon had served faithfully as a unifying influence that had kept together the varying elements of his enormous charge; hence those who were to find themselves in the confines of the new parish did not relish the change. The opposition was surmounted when the borders were set between Holy Trinity and the new St. Patrick's, and we might add that the outlook was anything but propitious for the new pastor.

Father J. J. Burke had been selected to found this parish. The work he had done in the small parishes were indications of his ability as a financier and the good Bishop felt he was sending an able man for the work in Bloomington.

The most uninviting portion of an otherwise beautiful city was selected for the site. With a view of cinder heaps from the near mines, within

hearing distance of the noise of shops and whistles of engines, were not, as a historian of the parish termed them, elements that inspire labor either of hand or head, but adverse circumstances do but whet the zeal of one inspired by purest motives. The most central point to serve the congregation worshiping at St. Patrick's was this auspicious spot.

St. Patrick's was organized June 13, 1892, and services were held in Kirstens Hall on West Chestnut Street. The brick structure that ornaments what is known as the West End was dedicated June 11, 1893, by the Most Reverend Bishop John Lancaster Spalding who spoke at the evening services. Quoting from a pamphlet compiled for the dedicatory ceremonies we give the closing words of that eloquent man reminding the congregation that they were now in possession of another force of the mightiest influence of human life and exhorted them to be faithful to their "pastor" whom I have sent to you because he is a "true man."

There was ever a spirit of harmony existing where Father Burke labored which certainly was productive of good results. Organizations that had for their aim the literary and social development of the parish were carefully looked after. Despite the many hindrances, by skillful han-



*St. Patrick's School
Bloomington, Ill.*

dling of finances Father Burke erected a new parochial residence in 1897. The comfortable eleven-room two-story brick structure is located on the lot east of the church. The interior was adequately furnished when ready for occupancy.

Always a conservative, Father Burke was sure of the successful completion before he attempted the erection of a much needed school. The plans were made by P. O. Moratz, architect, and the firm of Gildner & Weishaar were the general building contractors. The school is of a Colonial type of architecture and corresponds with the rest of the parish property of pressed brick and stone. The school was built to accommodate one hundred and fifty or sixty pupils. The second floor is occupied by a hall with a seating capacity for five or six hundred persons. In this hall are held the school theatricals, lectures, debates and the social activities of the growing parish.

The Dominican Sisters from the Mound were placed in charge of the school, which consisted of eight grades and a high school. Blending the religious with the secular and scientific instruction those who completed the prescribed course were certainly better equipped for the battle of Life.

After his World Tour in 1901, Father Burke devoted much time to writing. His books and

trips abroad are revealed at length elsewhere in this book.

Shortly after the Spanish American War, perhaps about the year 1903, our government brought over a number of Philippine students and distributed them among the educational institutions of our country. Five of these young men were sent to the Normal University near Bloomington. Three of these were good Catholics and the other two were apostates from the Faith, taught the Philippines by the Spanish Padres for more than four centuries.

One of the Protestants named Nicado was a very bright young fellow. He was not at Normal long when he wrote an article against the Catholic Church for the college paper and which later appeared in the Bloomington *Pantagraph*. Father Burke remonstrated with Professor Felmley, President of Normal, who said that he could not control what the students wrote for their paper. After several appeals, that were of no avail, Father Burke warned President Felmley that he would see to it that a State institution supported by Catholics as well as others would not vilify or allow its students to vilify the teachings of any religion.

After a few letters in the *Pantagraph* that exposed the narrowness of the man in taking such

a stand, President Felmley admitted his mistake and affairs were amicably settled. After the settlement, the United States government wrote to Professor Felmley advising him to prevent, in the future, the students sent there from attacking the religion of anyone.

Father Burke was often solicited to speak at non-Catholic churches. Following a lecture on Education given at the Methodist Church in Bloomington, Ill., he received an invitation to appear on the platform at Stanford, Ill., with a Reverend White, anti-Catholic, to answer controversial religious questions. White was one of the many so-called preachers around the country at that time vilifying the teachings of the Catholic Church. He was a man of no mean intelligence and he had read a great deal of Catholic literature; but he was out to make money from the unwitting public and his spurious charges against the Church fell on many eager ears.

Father Burke replied to the invitation in this manner, "I will not lower myself to appear in debate with this man, but I will be happy to come to your city and give a lecture on 'What the Catholic Church Believes and Teaches.'" After several days he received an answer to this letter stating that Father would be welcome and that the committee would obtain the largest hall

available for the Sunday night following. Near six in the evening of the day appointed Father Burke arrived by train at Stanford. Eight o'clock was the stated hour for the lecture to begin, but on arriving at the hall fully an hour early it was found that standing room only was to be had.

Father Burke began his discourse by telling his audience that he felt qualified to speak because he had been in close contact with both Catholic and non-Catholic all his life. His early years were spent in the public schools and afterwards he had taught the district schools; finally, that his first high school work had been given in a non-Catholic college, also that he had completed the Catholic training requisite to his ministerial work. He spoke convincingly for two and one-half hours. Before he seated himself to await the closing remarks of the chairman in charge, a man in the audience rose and asked to be allowed the floor. Although Father had never seen Reverend White, he felt instinctively that it was he who had risen. In a quiet voice the good priest replied that he had no authority to allow anyone to speak, but the committee in charge could use their discretion. The chairman remembering what Father Burke had written denied the man the floor. The fellow was furious, he rose again to his feet and asked to be allowed to make an

announcement: Father thought that he should be granted the request so he acquiesced and the chairman motioned the man to speak. He was so incensed at being outwitted that he fumbled for words; finally he roared: "I challenge this man to a debate in this hall on next Sunday evening. I shall refute the statements of this priest, who claims that he can bring God out of a wafer." There were two Catholics in the hall, but to the rest of the audience the subject of Transubstantiation was almost unknown, so his sacrilegious remarks did not register. When he had finished with his vituperations Father Burke again addressed the audience: "When you are looking for true information on a subject, you naturally go to one whom you know is qualified to speak, one whom you are sure knows the subject. You are not liable to go to an enemy to find the truth. I have talked to you for two hours and I defy anyone in this gathering to say that I have offended by my speech. I have given you first-hand information. This man has spoken a few words, but in a few seconds he has given the vilest kind of an insult to anyone who is a Catholic. He is an enemy of the Church and you could not hope to get anything but a biased report from him. I will let you judge for yourselves." Feeling that he was foiled in his attempt to draw

Father into a controversy, the irate fellow left the hall in a rage crying, "Jesuitical, Jesuitical."

There are those in the world who will not lend their ears to the changing times, they maintain a stubborn resistance to the inevitable with the result that Life does not come in and sup with them, it passes them by like a parade and they grow old without grace. Many problems difficult to decide arise in the life of a priest that involve the telling of unpleasant truths, that require the challenging of statements regarding everyday matters, and unless he cultivates a mental alertness his thinking will be a third-rate muddled development that will relegate him to the background where he cannot hope to obtain the best results for God or man.

This cannot be said of Monsignor Burke. . . . He has kept pace. He has always had a knowledge and a keen insight into the shifting currents of popular favor, and though he did not employ the floweriness that he had in command: when speaking for a principle the weight of his logic made his statements carry. Because of his ability to convey fundamental values he was in demand as a speaker.

About this time the Local Option and Prohibition questions were being widely discussed.

Local Option was a plan by which the voters

could abolish liquor within the limits of their cities, townships and districts. The Anti-Saloon League, organized in Ohio in 1850, had continually been working for Total Prohibition. Backed by the Rockefellers, Morgans, Kresges, who donated liberally to the League they were able all these years to continue lobbying for this cause. The saloon had degenerated into dens of iniquity. The liquor interests boasted bravely that it was not possible to legislate these saloons out of existence. Local Option therefore struck a popular chord, a happy medium between the dripping wets and the bone dry platform.

Father Burke had often spoken on Temperance. He formed among the young men of his parish a League of the Cross. Those wishing to join pledged themselves to stay out of saloons along with a pledge of abstinence from liquor. The breaking of this pledge automatically severed their connections with the society. A gymnasium was fitted up and an interest in athletics fostered—a crying need in the West End of Bloomington at that time. It was not long until the roster could boast seven hundred names. Many from other sections of the city joined. This League paved the way for another society that came later, the Knights of Father Mathew, a total abstinence group that accomplished much

good for the temperance cause. After this good work Father Burke's ideas on Local Option became known outside of his immediate locale.

While he had been a total abstainer all his life, he did not favor total prohibition or Prohibition as it finally evolved into a National Law in 1919. He believed in personal and public temperance, and the zoning of the saloon to areas properly policed, where their influence would not affect the young.

At the invitation of Honorable E. O'Connell, Representative to the State Legislature from Bloomington, Father Burke spoke on the subject of Local Option before the House and the Senate at Springfield, Ill., in 1902.

Two old friends who had gone to Springfield to hear the talk, one was a Prohibitionist and the other was an Optionist, almost came to blows trying to decide in which camp that Father Burke belonged. The Prohibitionist felt that since the Reverend Father advocated and actually practiced personal abstinence he most surely was speaking for Prohibition, and the Optionist claimed that he was fostering Local Option since he tolerated the saloon under restrictions.

After many years of work the forces for National Prohibition caused the enactment of the

Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which law went into effect in July, 1919. The loss of revenue to the government, the birth of the bootlegger, the crime waves and subsequent evils brought on by the breaking down of law and order; the general disrespect for lawful authority and our courts of law were all aftermaths of this foolish attempt at curtailing American Liberty. After fifteen years of trials and psychological changes the country has voiced its sentiment and we again see Local Option as they choose by vote. Mention has been made of this issue in this book to show that Father Burke had vision and that he has not been a "die hard"—he adjusted himself to enacted legislation of which he was not in accord, and he has lived to see the country revert to the line of reasoning that he strongly recommended to the lawmaking bodies of his State years ago.

Father Burke was singularly honored when he was invited to give an address at the Public Memorial Service held in honor of the late President William McKinley at the Coliseum in Bloomington on September 19, 1901. Other speakers for this event were Honorable A. E. Stevenson, former Vice-President of the United States; Judge Weldon, Court of Claims; Congressman Rowell of Bloomington. Judge Fitz-

Henry, now of the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, was chairman of the committee that arranged the program. This address was a splendid eulogy to the martyred President who had met death at the hand of an anarchist while attending the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, N. Y.

Besides discharging a patriotic duty at the memorial services, Father Burke was adding another name to his long list of converts. A wealthy lady visiting in Bloomington from Canada heard the talk at the Coliseum. She was so impressed by the directness and charity of the discourse that she made the trip back to Bloomington later in the year in order to have Father Burke instruct her before embracing the Faith.

At the solicitation of President Felmley and Professor McCormick, at Normal University, Father Burke spoke at the Fiftieth Anniversary of the founding of that institution. He also gave the principal address at the Seventieth Anniversary of the founding of Bloomington held in Miller Park before a large gathering. Many times he was called upon to speak before the County Rural Conventions over the State. He prepared an exhaustive history of the Irish in McLean County for the State Historical Society and until his duties became too heavy he gave a series

of lectures on Chautauqua programs. Some of the popular themes were Temperance, Dangerous Tendencies, Divorce, Law Breaking, Pharisaism and The Eternal City.

A parishioner of Father Burke's, James Hart, a writer of no mean ability who still lives in Bloomington, wrote several poems at that time. Space will not allow them to be repeated in full; however, he has given permission for the use of a few stanzas from "Salutation of an Old Parishioner to His Pastor." It gives one the idea of the intimate feeling that existed between the good priest and his flock.

'Tis you Father Burke be the man of our hearts
The Likes of you's not to be found in these parts,
Where the light of the Faith's kept forever
 a-burnin'

By priests that are famous for goodness and
 learnin'.

There's none, be he Christian or Hebrew or Turk
But takes off his hat to our good Father Burke.

You'll see shops foremen to get someone a job.
That '94 strike with your members played hob.
The boys will salute you as you pass O'Neill's
 store,

Be careful at Chestnut the tracks crossin' o'er,
Pat Dixon may stop you to roast Johnny Bull,
Or Jimmie Ryan, ditcher, a funny yarn pull;
On some heavy matter Frank Gunn will confer,

Here comes Martin Brennan, who'll yet make a stir (present member of Congress, 1935). An' there goes Dick Fanning, a broth of a lad, Pinkey Bride here on crutches to see you'll be glad.

The whole Forty Acres behind you will push,
And that goes also for the folks in the Bush.

Here I must abide 'till my labors are done,
An' take my departure when life's course is run.
And oh, a sweet thought that's consolin' me now,
To feel of your Reverence's hand on my brow.
Monsignor or Bishop by that time you'll be,
Whatever your title, dear Pastor to me,
May God spare you to us, and prosper your work,
An' the top o' the mornin' to you, Father Burke.
The last stanza seems to have been written with somewhat of a vision.

Father Burke had purchased eleven bells, for St. Patrick's, chimes that played tunes; there was no place in the diocese that could boast that number of bells. During the Easter week and on other occasions Father Burke had the organist play significant music that could be heard all over the city. That this was appreciated is evidenced in an appreciative poem by Mr. James Hart, "My Parish Bells."

O, bells of St. Patrick's,
Peal, peal grandly on,
May thy merry chimes echo
Long after we're gone.

Father was held in high esteem by the citizens of Bloomington is evidenced in this editorial estimate written in 1901 by the late Theodore A. Braley (editor of the Bloomington *Bulletin*):

Father Burke, the pastor of St. Patrick's parish, covering a large territory in the western part of this city, has by his earnest work for the uplifting of mankind, his ideal private life, and his frank and engaging personality, earned the respect of the entire city of Bloomington irrespective of creed. His work in the parish has been productive of education and temperance, independent or rather auxiliary to the teachings from the pulpit. He has organized and carried to a successful issue temperance clubs, literary clubs, lecture courses and other things calculated to instruct and benefit the people, and has undoubtedly done splendid work for temperance by moral persuasion, and in the line of example and precept also by providing wholesome study and entertainment calculated to take the mind of the young from trivial and debasing influence and give them congenial as well as profitable employment.

Just about a year before leaving Bloomington the venerable Bishop Dunne again asked Father Burke to build a church. It was to be the mission church at Downs, Ill. Father Burke was loath to do this work because by so doing he was

forced to cross the territory of the good Father Weldon, but the Bishop was determined to have Father Burke do the work. Conscious always of his duty to his superiors, Father John J. built the Downs church. It is a fine little structure and still serves the needs of that community. Before building this church the Bishop sent an assistant to St. Patrick's who rendered valuable assistance in building the church. The new assistant was Reverend Father Timmons, now of Clinton, Ill.

Father Burke's Silver Jubilee was celebrated the day of the dedication of the Downs church, July 29, 1910. There was a Solemn High Mass attended by approximately 100 priests. A banquet followed at the Parish Hall.

The evening celebration was held in the Majestic Theater. The program consisted of music and a varied display of oratory.

Two prominent laymen gave the principal addresses. The Catholic speaker chose as his subject, "The Pastor as a Churchman"; the other gentleman spoke on "Father Burke as a Citizen."

A purse of silver was presented at the banquet to Father Burke, who had gained the love and respect of the community by his sterling worth and unselfish devotion to his God and country.

CHAPTER IX

FOREIGN TRAVELOGUES

1901

IN 1901, Father Burke planned to take an extensive trip abroad, to be away about six months, and during his absence Father Thomas, O.S.B., would carry on the duties of the parish.

Sailing on the German liner *Kaiser Wilhelm II*, the southern route by way of the Azores, Father Burke found himself to be the only priest aboard. They were a few days out of New York when they experienced a terrific storm. The deck chairs had been roped down and most of the passengers had taken refuge in their staterooms. Father Burke and a young doctor, who was on his honeymoon, alone braved the promenade deck; at first the undulating of the huge ship was exhilarating till the fury of the storm took both the priest and the doctor off their feet. Waves deluged the decks, tore lifeboats from their davits and only by dint of good luck was the doctor able to save the good priest from being swept into the sea. The rest of the journey the two ship acquaintances enjoyed the mutual interests and the common dangers together.

With but one stop made at Ponta Delgada, St. Michael's, the Azores, the *Kaiser Wilhelm* landed a day late at Gibraltar, having been thrown off course by the storm.

For two hundred years Gibraltar has been a garrison and crown colony of Great Britain, her chief naval base on the Mediterranean route to India. The fortifications are so strong that the Rock is considered impregnable. The Rock itself rises to a height of 1,408 feet and at its foot lies the city with a population of 25,000 souls. Aliens are not allowed to reside there without the special permission from the British authorities. Six miles across the bay is the Spanish city of Ceuta and across the Strait is Tangier.

After visiting the fort on Gibraltar, Father Burke inquired at the wharf about the boat for Tangier, learning that night boats plied back and forth across the bay, he tried to induce his young friend to accompany him to Tangier for a side trip. Loathe to leave his bride alone in a strange city, the doctor refused, so Father Burke, glad that he was not thus encumbered, went alone.

The visit to Granada was next. It was here that Washington Irving repaired to when he wrote "The Alhambra." Father Burke's comment was "By all means see this beautiful place."

More than two hundred years after the Moors had been driven out of the rest of Spain they held the city of Granada. The picturesque city with the Alhambra, a perfect relic of Moorish art, is deserving of the traveler's attention. The Court of Lions is the most beautiful part of the building. There are in this court 124 columns surrounding an alabaster fountain, which is supported on the backs of twelve marble lions. It is in a wonderful state of preservation.

Leaving Granada, nothing strikes the traveler more forcibly than the backwardness of the present-day Spain. With vast coal beds at their disposal, one still finds the hotels heated with braziers; however, we must give them credit for bettering their conditions in the past few years. The fact that they maintained a neutrality during the World War, 1914-1918, has greatly improved the financial status of the country.

The tour left Gibraltar one day late with Algiers the next port of call. The home of the French Foreign Legion is a combination city, one of ultramodern aspect and the other an ancient Arab settlement. It has one of the finest harbors and this harbor is unique in the fact it was the first one constructed of concrete.

The next stop was made at Genoa and from there to Naples. The trip to the Museum here is

a worth while idea and of course no one would go to Naples without a visit to Vesuvius, the eternal belcher that has taken such a toll of lives.

Pompeii's ruins now viewed with awe were buried under a welter of volcanic ash in 79 A. D. by Vesuvius, which has never ceased to issue steam and lava from its truncated crater since that time. Father Burke missed the most recent destruction by four years.

Passing through the Straits of Messina, Mount Etna can be seen, also the fabled rock of Scylla and the whirlpool of Charybis outside the harbor.

Father did not go to Palermo, the melting pot of the Mediterranean, but continued on to Alexandria, one of the centers of the early Church and later the seat of the Arian heresy.

The first Christian Bishop of Alexandria was St. Mark, the patron of our own parish. This good Bishop suffered martyrdom on April 25, 68 A. D.

The lighthouse on the Island of Pharos near Alexandria was one of the wonders of the world, built three hundred years before the Christian Era.

From Alexandria, Father Burke traveled by train to Cairo, the largest city in Africa. Egypt has many ruins and many wonders and we cannot help but be awed by the unmatched panorama

that comes to our eyes as miles and miles unfold them. The fertile Valley of the Nile, the Pyramids of the Gizeh, the Great Pyramid, and the strange and ugly Sphinx. We stop and listen to the teeming echoes of the lost cities and empires, we wonder at the age-old ruins and the splendor comes back to us.

It is very difficult to climb to the top of the Great Pyramid because of the irregular height of the stones that were at one time covered with marble. Father Burke made the ascent with the assistance of three Arabs and was well repaid by the magnificent view. The fruitful delta of the Nile, the sandy waste of the great Sahara Desert, the white marble palaces in Cairo ten miles distant, all compensate for the tedious climb and the dangerous descent.

The trip to old Memphis, the oldest city in Egypt, was made by boat, twenty-five miles up the Nile from Cairo. Unless the huge black statue of Rameses II, forty-five feet high, interests you, don't go to old Memphis, for there is little else there.

From here, Father went on donkeys about fifteen miles over the Sahara to the buried Temple of the Bulls. These temples extend twelve hundred feet in the rock under many feet of sand. They are eighteen feet high. Such burial places

were costly in time, labor and money. Luxor and old Thebes were also visited and he viewed the Assouan Dam that regulates the flow of the Nile at the first cataract.

Naturally the religious appeal of Heliopolis and old Cairo interested Father Burke as it would any Catholic who loves his religion. Heliopolis was the home of Joseph of the Old Testament after he had been sold by his brothers, and also it was in this place that the Holy Family took refuge in their flight from Herod. Here we find the Well of the Virgin with a sycamore, that pious legend tell us sprouted from the roots of the tree that sheltered Our Lord, the Blessed Mother and good St. Joseph, during their stay in Egypt. The place of their abode is now a chapel under an old Coptic Church and Mass is celebrated on altars that cover the spot made sacred by their feet.

Father took leave of Cairo by rail and arrived at Port Said the same evening, leaving immediately by steamer for Jaffa, the port of Jerusalem. The night crossing of the Mediterranean was made on an English boat with an Irish captain. The dangerous landing at Jaffa is accomplished by Syrian oarsmen who take the passengers from the ship to the shore by boats, a good half mile distant. No difficulty was experienced by Father

Burke, and he had the good fortune to meet a Franciscan by the same name as his own shortly after landing, who acted as guide for him around Jerusalem.

The description of the Holy Lands has been covered so fully by Father Burke in his book, *The Church in Many Lands*, that we shall pass over them here. The humble offerings of this writer could not do justice to a subject that is sacred to all Christians. Let me heartily recommend Father Burke's book to you for your greater knowledge and sanctification.

On completion of the tour of the Holy Land, Father Burke again boarded a boat for Alexandria, embarking early the next night for Athens. A severe storm rendered all on board violently ill, in fact Father Burke at first feared that he would die; then, as the illness progressed in intensity, he was afraid that he would not die. So distressing is that strange malady, seasickness. When the dawn broke the good priest realized that the ship had docked and he was anxious to learn just where they had landed. On inquiring, he found that during the storm the rudder of the boat had been broken and the captain had turned the ship back towards Alexandria, where they would have to await repairs. The forced delay gave the entourage two extra days at Alexandria.

Father visited a Jesuit school that had been doing wonderful work in that locality and many points of interest that he had missed on his first trip. A singular thing noted was that there were many more vessels in the harbor of Alexandria flying the American flag than in any other port on the trip. After the damage to the rudder had been repaired the voyage was resumed.

Piræus is the seaport of Athens, but one has to travel by rail a distance of five miles to that city. Athens was the center of Greek culture thousands of years ago. There is plenty to feast the eye on at Athens. The beautiful golden ruins of the Acropolis greet you on the hill that at one time held the main population of Athens. It surely reflects the glory of another day, for it is not just a cold marble structure of colossal proportions, but instead, soft and glowing, set upon that hill along with the most magnificent temple of Greece, the Parthenon and its Doric Columns. The Turks in 1685 used this lovely temple for a powder magazine, when an explosion almost destroyed the edifice; however, there is still enough left to form a background for professional and romantic study.

Amazed at the stupendous proportions, the beauty of line and the tragic history of these

buildings erected to false gods, we cannot help but wish we could have glimpsed the splendor of that which is gone. The huge statue of Athena, bronze and ivory, that could be seen at Sunium, fifteen miles distant, and the many other works of that great sculptor Phidias, which seemed to receive the intellectual outpourings of the times and to reflect the same are awe-inspiring.

Father took the short but dangerous route from Athens, through the canal to Corinth. The name suggests lost luxury and the works of St. Paul. From here he journeyed to Patras, a small fortified seaport of Greece. On arriving here one is given as a token of friendly feeling, a sheath of flowers, resembling our funeral wreaths. It is a pretty little city—the gray landscape contrasted against the pink oleander plants that grow in profusion around the modest white huts of the village, make a pretty picture. Olive trees are here in abundance.

After Corfu, moving by boat out of the Mediterranean, past the Ionian group, Father next visited Brindisi, the small town almost in the heel of the Italian Boot. Leaving Brindisi by rail and traveling over the mountains, Father again came to Naples and from there to Rome. Between Naples and Rome, a distance of about thirty miles, can be seen the cradle of the Bene-

dictine Order. High up on the mountain it stands, an imposing structure. Father Burke was not accustomed to having a train stop and start without the call from the men in charge; he had stopped off to see the Abbey on Monte Cassino a few minutes; when he looked around, to his consternation he found that his train was speedily traveling on. He made a frantic leap and was successful in making the platform. He rather is inclined to believe that he received a volley of profanity from the conductor for this rash move. He could not understand the language. Father says that the view of the Abbey of Monte Cassino was worth the risk.

It is certain that no layman could experience the same feeling that stir the breast of a priest of God on visiting Rome, the Eternal City. Without a doubt it surpasses all other cities for historic interest. Capital of the empire that first brought law and orderly government to part of Europe, capital now of the present modern government of Italy and seat of the Papacy, the head of the Roman Catholic Church.

Once you go to Rome you will want to go again to feel yourself viewing through the veil of centuries the greatest pageant the world has ever seen, for the saying is true, "All roads lead to Rome."

Father Burke had made the acquaintance of a Father R———, guest at his hotel in Rome. This priest had retired after forty years of pious labors in Australia and was living in Rome. He knew the city so intimately that he graciously made a circuitous route of the points of interest by auto with Father Burke. Later Father singled out the spots that he wanted to consider alone. The priest complimented him after a few days for the ground that he had covered in so short a time. We all know, however, that Monsignor never was and never will be a procrastinator. He viewed the Forum, the Capitol and the gigantic Colosseum. The fragmentary ruins of this building appall us. Built in the year 80 A. D., it held twenty tiers of seats for eighty thousand people, who came to make sport of the Christian martyrs that were tortured there. The Pantheon, the best preserved ruin in Rome, the Baths of the Mad Emperor, command attention. They hold the traveler enthralled, bewildered and subdued. It is hard for the mind to picture the tumultuous surge that has pulsed through Rome for more than two thousand years. What a mingling of emotions we experience as we view with awe the wonderful achievement in these architectural ruins, then turn to the work of the underground empire, the strange and cavernous

Catacombs. Some of them five stories under the earth. Both are mute evidences of the History that was Rome. Empires have fallen, the glories of their early days dimmed by debaucheries of their declining years, but the Catacombs speak an ever beauteous language of Faith's perseverance. By the endurance of those who lived and died there, we are made the heirs of the wealth bequeathed to us through their sufferings.

These wonders of the Eternal City pale into insignificance beside the beauty of St. Peter's, the sublime "Jewel of Rome." It is here that we can see the Tomb of St. Peter under the central dome. The unspeakable loveliness of this spacious place grows on one and we do not wonder that it took more than one hundred years to carry to completion the original plans of Pope Julius who ordered it built in 1506. Michelangelo and Raphael spent most of their lives chiseling and painting in this great place, leaving it a priceless treasure among priceless treasures.

The Vatican has been called the Wonder House of the World. It covers thirteen acres and has a thousand halls, chambers and chapels, all sculptured and painted by artists whose names will live on through the centuries. The Sistine Chapel contains the famous "Last Judgment," by Michelangelo.

Not far away Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit Order, sleeps; also our mystical saint of the fourteenth century, Catherine of Siena.

Father Burke had spent almost three weeks in Rome and had not been granted an audience with the Pope. He naturally was a trifle disappointed and had decided to continue his journey, when he mentioned the matter to his fellow priest. They both were of the opinion that the failing health of the Pontiff was responsible for the delay. It was a known fact that the doctors had forbidden the Holy Father the continuing of audiences. This trying exertion was too much for his frail health. After saying Mass at St. Clement's the next morning Father returned to his hotel to find a letter stating that the Pope would receive him at 11 the following morning.

Father Burke had written two volumes up to this time, *The Reasonableness of Catholic Ceremonies and Practices* and the *Characteristics of the Early Church*, which he had bound in white leather with the intention of presenting them to the Holy Father. Knowing our good Monsignor's penchant for promptness, need we say that he started early for the Vatican the morning appointed. This was indeed a privilege he had long looked forward to, and contrary to custom, Father Burke was received with a party of twen-

ty-five nobles in a private audience. When the auspicious moment arrived, Monsignor presented the books to His Holiness, who thanked him, asking if he was a professor or teacher. Father answered that he was a pastor, who between caring for his flock and building new churches found some time to do a little writing. His Holiness answered, "Bene," "Bene."

Father Burke can claim the pleasure and the distinction of an audience with the Pope of Rome, His Holiness Leo XIII, who was unquestionably the outstanding character of the nineteenth century. During his second visit to Rome, some years afterward, Father Burke had the consolation of an audience with the saintly Pius X.

From Rome, Father went to Florence, fair city of Italy, home of artists, writers, historians and heretics. The names of Da Vinci, Dante, Machiavelli and Savonarola are linked with Florence along with Amerigo Vespucci from whom our continents took their name. It is a beautiful city, each street is a world of art, and it is said that the fairest flowers of the human mind were produced in Florence.

In Milan, Father visited the former convent of Santa Maria della Grazie, on whose refectory walls hang the famous "Last Supper" by Da Vinci. The Milan Cathedral, third largest in

Europe and Sant Ambrogio on the Piazza de Duomo where St. Ambrose baptized St. Augustine are to be admired. In this church—Milan Cathedral—the early kings were crowned with the Lombardy circlet thought to have been formed from a nail of the Crucifixion. There is also in Milan a celebrated archæological museum. Italy has given generously of her people to each division of art and culture. It has always been a seat of learning.

Before leaving Italy, Father Burke wished to see Venice. Built on one hundred and seventeen islands in a lagoon off the Adriatic, the quiet dreaminess of the canal city is soothing. Little did Monsignor Burke imagine as he gazed on the world famous Cathedral of St. Mark that he would shortly be ministering to the spiritual needs of a parish that claimed the same Saint as its patron. The beautiful Cathedral of St. Mark is of Byzantine architecture with five Oriental domes that resemble the great mosque of Santa Sophia at Constantinople. It is an amazing wealth of color, ornamentation and design. The four colossal horses at the entrance will never be forgotten. Near this grand structure is the Campanile or bell tower. One year after Father's visit there, this tower collapsed. Due to the inundations on the muddy foundation on which all

Venice is built, the constant flowing of the canal causes trouble for many builders. A few years ago a wealthy Italian living in New York City gave one million dollars to rebuild the Campanile. Venice also boasts seventy churches, a rare old library and the famous sandy beach known the world over as the Lido.

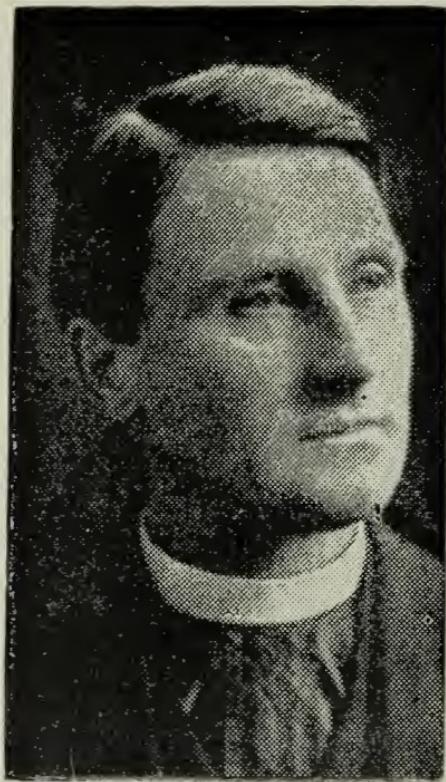
Father Burke visited Lucerne, Switzerland; Cologne, Germany; Brussels, Belgium; Paris, France; London, England; Glasgow, Scotland, and almost all of Ireland before returning home.

1914

On the verge of a nervous breakdown and at the advice of his physician Father Burke took another sea voyage. There is no medicine to act on tired nerves that equals the water and particularly the salt water.

The trip to California was made on the Santa Fé. Father had scarcely arrived in San Francisco, when he was greeted by an old parishioner, Albert Kanne, who makes that Land o' Sunshine his home.

The steamer *China* of the Southern Pacific Lines sailed from San Francisco on February 3rd. After six days' travel they came within sight of Molokai, one of the eight islands in the Hawaiian



Father Burke at the age of 50

group. No well informed person would admit that he did not feel a pathetic interest in Molokai. The wonderful work accomplished by Father Damien on this island has benefited all mankind. That loathsome scourge, leprosy, is cared for here. Leprosy, Father Damien and Molokai are synonymous. The hospital here that could accommodate seven hundred lepers was built by Father Damien at the commission of the Hawaiian government. Other institutions have been built that carry on the noble work started by this brave priest, who gave his life, a victim of that disease he had labored to obliterate.

Honolulu is the principal city in the Hawaiian Islands. On February 9th the *China* dropped anchor in Honolulu harbor. Father Burke toured the city by auto and made the trip out into the country to the Pali. In the year 1795 many of the Oahuan lost their lives when they engaged in warfare with the Hawaiians who forced them up the sides of this precipice 1,200 feet high set between peaks 3,000 feet high. Within our memory the Pali has been an inspiration to novelists and playwrights. Stage adaptations of "The Bird of Paradise" are still popular and the setting for that play was around this famous peak.

Honolulu is fast becoming a typical American city. The customs, old religious beliefs and

the grass huts of the early Kanakas have practically disappeared. English is the prevailing language. Like all the Pacific Islanders they are a musical people, and their particular type of music has had a wide popular vogue.

At Fort Shafter and Schofield Barracks are located many thousand American soldiers. The United States Engineers are always busy here.

Pearl Harbor is six miles west of Honolulu and besides being a United States coaling and naval station it is one of the finest land-locked harbors in the world. Dredging the channel through the coral reef has made this harbor available for a vessel of any size.

Father viewed many pineapple, sugar and hemp plantations, also the "Taro" plats. The natives work these plats sometimes up to their knees in water, to cultivate the root of the plant which when baked, pounded and mixed with water forms a fermented paste called "Poi." This is the chief food of the islanders. Saki is their drink. Often, when a United States transport is sailing away from Honolulu for home can be heard this ditty that is registering the dislike of the soldiers for the islanders and their food.

"We won't go back to Oahu, anymore
We won't go back to Oahu, anymore
You can have your Poi and Saki

And your dingy dark Kanaka
But
We won't go back to Oahu anymore."

There are many active volcanoes on the islands of which Kilauea and Mauna Loa are the largest, yet they have done no destructive erupting for one hundred and seventy-five years or more.

The islands are all well governed and all classes seem prosperous.

The Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace was seventy-five years old when Father Burke visited there. This has since been replaced by a beautiful new edifice.

Father was accorded the custom of giving leis (garlands of flowers hung around the neck) to the departing friends. It is a wish for Bon Voyage and a native custom that has survived the modern changes.

Twelve days out of sight of land gives one ample time to reflect on the immensity of the universe, to imagine the most fantastic dreams: but, then, if never before do we realize the magnitude of the power and goodness of God, Our Father and Creator and the relative degree of our littleness in the scheme of things called into being by Him.

The distance from Honolulu to Yokohoma was covered by the *China* in twelve days.

Father was fortunate to reach Japan in February, the month of the cherry blossom and the myriad other beautiful flowers that are in profusion there at that time. The carefully planned fields, the landscaped terraces cultivated to the top (for Japan is a bevy of small mountains), the beauty of sacred Fujiyama, make an unusually lovely scene. This explains the reason for the inherent artistic sense possessed by even the most ignorant of Japanese.

After Japan unlocked her doors in 1854 and began to adopt western civilization she has made the most notable and unexpected change.

Father landed at Yokohoma, a port that handles one-half of Japan's foreign trade, and is eighteen miles from Tokio, the capitol and largest city in Japan. Osaka the second city and an industrial center was visited, then, on to Kobe by rail, passing Kyoto the center of the Buddhist faith with its beautiful temples that made it a Mecca for Japanese of that belief.

The North German Lloyd *Derrflinger*, a graceful boat, carried Father from Kobe to Nagasaki along the lower end of the Inland Sea. The variety of islands is most interesting, but the old romance of Japan is passing and the hum and

rush of modern industry is evident all over the islands. Labor laws are unknown or at least not observed, and the very system that proved a detriment to Western Europe long ago, developing of a factory enterprise on the top of an old agricultural organization, with the debasement of the working classes, exists in Japan.

At Nagasaki the Cathedral and the Church of Our Lady of Martyrs drew our pastor's attention. The latter was built by a wealthy French woman honoring the Japanese martyrs whose feast we celebrate each year on February 5th. There were seventeen young native students preparing for the priesthood when Father visited Nagasaki.

Leaving this port at night the voyage was made through the Yellow and China Seas to Shanghai, China. Like too many other cities we have mentioned, Shanghai is a duo-affair, one East and one West. One is clean and modern, the other old and unbelievably dirty. Each is distinct in boundary and government. Foochow Road in the Chinese part is a gorgeous glittery array of shops. The Willow Tea House which furnished the design for the celebrated Blue Willow Ware China is in this Road.

Tai-Shan is the most sacred spot in all China, for near here were born Confucius and Mencius.

This land of pongee silk and Coolie labor also claims Shantung, whose German concessions, mines, railroads and submarine cables were given to Japan by the Versailles Treaty after the World War. However, by the Armament Limitations Conference Japan later gave up these interests.

Hong Kong, 850 miles from Shanghai, lying in a natural harbor, is a meeting place for a great portion of the commerce from the Far East. Flags of all nations fly from their masts in this harbor. The mingling of nationalities is a contrasting picture. You perceive the British Colony across the mile-wide strait and the modern business district seems a strange background for the floating population of some sixty thousand inhabitants that live on houseboats and rafts along the shores. This is the headquarters for the China Squadron of the British Navy and unquestionably one of the beauty spots of the East. Father Burke visited the scene of the labors of the good Father Conrady who also gave his life for the lepers.

When Father boarded the *Derrflinger* for Manila he was delighted to find two priests and a Christian Brother aboard. Though the priests left the boat at Manila the Brother went on with Father to Singapore.

The journey to Manila was pleasant sailing.

The ship docked during the hours of siesta that all Manila takes to avoid the intense tropic heat. Stores close for two hours. Then Fort Santiago, Manila Bay, Cavite, the United States coaling station in Asiatic waters with the two fortified islands of Cavallo and Corregidor become electrified again till sundown. In the evening all Manila frequents the park that skirts the bay.

You find an excellent school system and a fine university in Manila. The observatory and its meteorologist is a great help to navigators in the Philippine waters where typhoons do so much damage.

Manila claims a Catholic University founded by the Jesuits before we had one in our own country. Manila had been the home of a schism by Gregoris Aglipay from 1902 to 1906. This did not cause much of a stir except to a few mercenary persons who wished to profit by joining his ranks.

Archbishop Harty was in America at the time of Father's visit. Bishop Patrella of Lypa was in charge.

The island city of Singapore is at the tip of the Malay peninsula midway between India and China. It is the seat of the government known as the Strait Settlements. While here Father visited the various smelting plants, the chief indus-

try of the island is tin smelting. This is one of the places Kipling had in mind when he said "East is East, West is West, and never the twain shall meet." Father thoroughly enjoyed the visit to the botanical gardens in Singapore.

Father visited Penang, Java, Sumatra and New Pomerania, spending three weeks in the Southern Seas. Everywhere in the Malay Archipelago you find the Catholic missionary. Even the territory south of the equator, a few hundred miles from Australia, are taken care of spiritually by the Fathers of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary who carry on the apostolic work.

When Father arrived at Colombo he was in the most southern point of Ceylon and more than one-half way around the world from Peoria, Ill., his starting place. Pearls and precious stones are in abundance among the natives; these gems are often worn in the nose or other portions of the body.

From Colombo to Aden in the southern part of Arabia, then to Port Said through the Suez Canal. Fourteen hours were required for the vessel to pass through this Canal which was built by Ferdinand de Lessep—1859 to 1869. It was as much of an engineering feat in that day as was our Panama Canal built by Goethals.

Having visited the Holy Lands in 1901 Father

proceeded on to Naples. It was here that he experienced trouble landing. Some days before he had missed on deck the familiar white habit of the Dominican companions aboard. These priests had been stricken with smallpox. All on board were forced to be vaccinated. Evidently the vaccine was not in proper form for Father Burke's arm became swollen and black and bothered him all through Europe until he arrived at Lourdes.

On his trip from Naples to Rome he visited Aquino the birthplace of St. Thomas Aquinas and Monte Cassino the cradle of the Benedictines. At last to Rome. During this second trip to Rome, Father visited ruins and remarkable monuments of antiquity that he had missed on his first trip.

The Vatican Library with its rare scriptural manuscripts, Martin Luther's original letters, offerings of Virgil, Dante and Tasso intrigued our pastor at this time. He visited the churches that he missed on his previous visit. St. Mary Major is among the most interesting churches in Rome.

Stationed as a Canon at this church was Father Burke's beloved former professor, Doctor Zardetti. He had just received word from the Pope of his appointment as Apostolic Delegate to Canada. He asked, that in the event that his health

would permit him to accept the honor, would Father Burke like to become his secretary. Father Burke was never put to the test of leaving St. Mark's, because the frail Doctor Zardetti became desperately ill and gave up the ghost a short while later.

It was at this time that Father Burke was received in public audience by His Holiness Pius X. Quoting from *The Church in Many Lands*, Father Burke says: "Leo XIII, churchman, statesman, and man of letters, was a man; take him for all in all we shall not look upon his like again. What I have said of Leo XIII is almost equally true of Pius X. Both were good, noble and great Popes. Leo XIII impressed the beholder and the world with his great intellectual gifts. Pius X with his loving Christ-like character."

Visiting the Umbrian Valley, crossing the Roman Campagna through the valley of the Tiber to Assisi was the next move of our pastor.

Assisi is the home of St. Francis and Clare. The chapel of the portiuncula is beneath the roof of the church, Our Lady of the Angels. This church is down in the valley, while the magnificent Church of St. Francis is up on the hill.

Father Raleigh, an Englishman, was attached to this church during Father Burke's visit. St. Clare was the founder of the Poor Clares, and

Father stopped to venerate that great saint at her tomb.

The distance from Assisi to Loretto is about one hundred and fifty miles. Of course the chief interest at Loretto is to view the Holy House of Nazareth and to contemplate its miraculous transfer to Loretto. This pious belief has been urged by the Popes since it happened in the latter part of the thirteenth century. From 1315 pilgrimages and miracles have attracted people to Loretto. Father obtained permission and offered the Holy Sacrifice on the altar that came with the house from Nazareth.

The tedious journey to Lourdes in Southern France was made in a few days with stops at Genoa and the Riviera in France.

The story of Lourdes is still being vividly called to our minds. A few weeks ago on the feast day of Bernadette the pilgrimage to the renowned shrine was of record-breaking proportions.

Father Burke returned home after his visit to Lourdes. Before leaving the shrine he used the water on his sore arm. He claims the soreness and discoloration left it shortly afterwards.

The religious aspects and interests of the various places visited are told graphically in his book *The Church in Many Lands*.

1922

Near this time in 1922, Father Burke felt the need of a vacation and realizing the efficacy to his health that his former trips had been, he decided to take a six weeks' vacation. Boarding a White Star Liner at New York he first visited Havana, Cuba, the largest and most important commercial city in the West Indies. This city built on a limestone foundation shows the traveler a perfect dovetailing of the old and new world. Here we see the old Cathedral built in 1724 that is supposed to have held the remains of Columbus until 1898, when they were removed. The United States battleship *Maine* was blown up in the harbor. The Spanish American War followed soon after this. Beautiful old forts can be seen. The Morro Castle, also La Cabana and Punto Castle are rare treats; as are Jamaica a lovely wonderland rising out of the Caribbean Sea, Porto Rico and San Juan where Theodore Roosevelt and his Rough Riders made history dear to American hearts. Next visited were the Virgin Islands, They are in the Windward Island group—Martinique is in this cluster; here are to be seen the ruins of the lovely old home where the Empress Josephine was born, also the vestiges of the beautiful St. Pierre, the city of 400,000 souls that was destroyed by an earthquake in 1902.

Traveling south the ship stopped at the Barbadoes. The huts here are covered with a pink clay and a singular thing about this place is that almost three-fifths of the population are women who carry on the work of the Island.

At Trinidad, Father Burke viewed the vast asphalt lake, one mile across and three miles around, where the United States obtains at least three-quarters of its asphalt supply. This island is only about six miles from the coast of South America.

Caracas is the Capital of Venezuela; here Father Burke tells us is a city as near like the Spanish Granada as can be seen in this hemisphere. The customs are also similar. Visiting La Guerra was to take us again into the Caribbean. Passing the massive walls of Cartagena, we are reminded of the many pirate and buccaneer stories that we feel were not just idle tales.

The Republic of Panama put on its seal in 1914, "A land divided the oceans united." At that time the greatest engineering wonder of the world had just been completed—the Panama Canal. Father Burke visited all of this truly marvelous achievement, the uniting of two oceans.

Completing a six weeks' tour, Father Burke returned home. This has been his last long trip.

Had he not taken the trip to South America previously, he tells me that he would have made the pilgrimage to the last Eucharistic Congress in Buenos Aires in 1934.

CHAPTER X

AUTHOR

WE have seen in a previous chapter that Father Burke spent much time in material things, building churches, schools, convents and rectories, nevertheless he did not neglect the spiritual welfare of his congregations. Besides sermons, sometimes three or four a week, and lectures, he organized various societies of men, women and children in all the parishes he had under his care. He even found time in his busy life for the writing of five interesting and instructive books. These in the order of their writing are:

Reasonableness of Catholic Ceremonies and Practices

Characteristics of the Early Church

The Great Problem

The Church in Many Lands

The Armor of Light

The object of the first of his books, written when a young priest, is to show that all of the ceremonies, teachings and practices of the Catholic Church are reasonable as well as Scriptural.

The book treats briefly and clearly of doctrine and practices much misunderstood, such as ceremonies necessary to Divine Worship, Honoring the Blessed Virgin, Confession of Sin, Praying for the Dead, Crucifixes and Images, the Marriage Tie, one and indissoluble, Celibacy and the Last Sacrament.

Six or seven editions of this small book were issued and it started many readers to the True Church.

The Dublin Review says of this book: "Clergymen having converts to instruct will find *Reasonableness of Catholic Ceremonies and Practices* very useful. It is admirable for brevity and clearness."

Of *Characteristics of the Early Church*, Bishop J. L. Spalding wrote: "I have examined your little volume on early Christian life and I feel confident it will do good. Whatever helps to make us realize and love the Life of Our Divine Lord and His Apostles renders us the highest service. Your efforts will contribute to this end and thereby enlighten and comfort many."

The aim of *The Characteristics of the Early Church* was to show as briefly and clearly as possible that the teachings and practices of the Catholic Church today are identical with those of the Church of the first five centuries.

The Church News said: "This is a timely work treating of the propagation, constitution, Fathers, writers, teachings, liturgy, catacombs, creeds, councils, trials and triumphs of the Early Church."

This book went through five editions. At the time it was written, Reading Circles were organized in the Eastern States and a great many of the Western States, and this book was used as a textbook by many of them. These Circles finally developed into the Catholic Summer School at Plattsburg, N. Y.

The third book written by our pastor was one of short sermons called *The Great Problem*.

The great problem for each one of us to solve is: "How shall I travel along the journey of life, that I may attain the happiness of Eternal Life?" The solution of this problem is attempted in the short sermons. In a few words the solution is: "Avoid evil and do good."

The Church in Many Lands was written in 1915, shortly after our pastor had returned from a trip around the world.

During this journey he was much impressed with the condition of the Church in other lands. A few of these impressions are recorded in the book. Although the principal object was to tell something of the work of the Church in Pagan

lands a few short chapters are added on the Church in Catholic Countries.

The Armor of Light, written in 1925, is the last of Father Burke's books. It is a book of short sermons on the Epistles.

The author says: "*The Armor of Light* is God's grace enlightening our mind and moving our will to avoid evil and do good." The subject of the first sermon suggests the title of the book, for all the sermons dwell on the necessity of avoiding evil and leading a good Christian life.

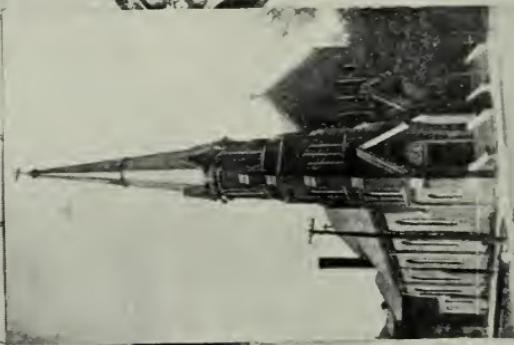
While the editing of sermon books seems to have reached the limit, books of short sermons on the Sunday Epistles were rare at the time this book was written.

In the preface the author expresses the hope that the book may be a means of leading many to "Cast off the works of darkness and put on the Armor of Light, avoid evil and lead good Christian lives."

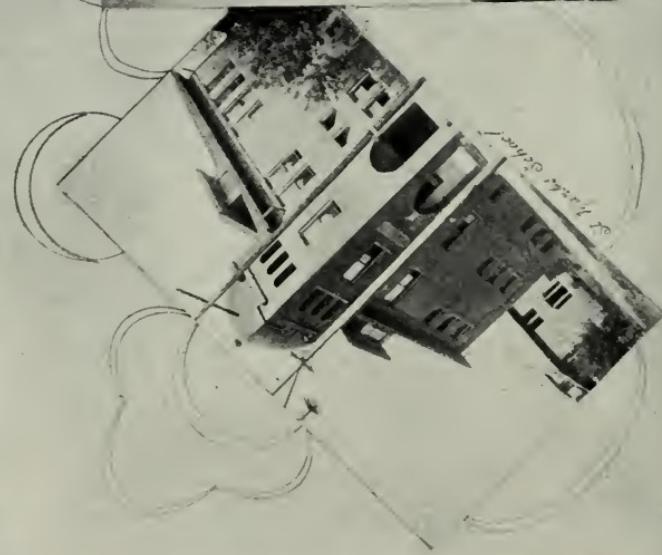
Rectory



Church



Old School



CHAPTER XI

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AT ST. MARK'S, PEORIA, ILL.

A QUARTER of a century ago on the seventh of December, 1910, Father Burke again obeyed the call of his Bishop and came to Peoria, Ill., to assume the duties as Pastor of St. Mark's. Located in the most beautiful part of a city of one hundred thousand population, this charge covered a large scope of territory known as the West Bluff. At that time there were one hundred and forty families living in its confines. The boundaries were the city limits on both the North and West, Moss Avenue, and a few blocks below the Bluff on the South, and North Street on the East.

When Father Burke took charge, succeeding the Very Reverend James Shannon (at present chaplain of Longwood Academy in Chicago), he found a church, residence and school already established. Father Shannon had built the school while the parsonage and the church had been erected eighteen years previous during the pastorate of Dean O'Reilly, now of Danville, Ill. All the properties were of brick and their style was in keeping with one another.

The church stands on the northeast corner of Underhill and Bradley Avenues, with the English Colonial residence adjoining on the lot just east. The school was on the corner directly back of the church on College Avenue and Underhill. Up to the completion of the convent, east of the school facing College Avenue, the Dominican Sisters came from St. Bernard's Parish located on Peoria's East Bluff, to teach the grades of St. Mark's. The enrollment did not require a teacher for each grade at first, so four nuns under the Superior Sister Mary Bernadine taught the eight grades. The new convent was built in 1911 and as the parish grew more teachers were added. At the present writing there are ten Sisters carrying on the work. Sister Juliana is the present Superior. Sister Phillipa who has been at St. Mark's ten years is well loved by all and she deserves the popularity. She is an excellent disciplinarian. St. Mark's owes much to Sister Phillipa.

It was customary for the Pastor of St. Mark's to minister to the needy of the Peoria County Poor Farm at Maxwell. This little station is within easy reach of Peoria today by reason of an excellent paved highway almost to its doors. To most Peorians, who remember Farmington Hill before the pavement was poured, it would be a menacing thought even in good weather.

Immediately after the conclusion of the services at St. Mark's on the day appointed, Father Burke would take the M. & St. L. train for the Poor Farm. His first trip was a memorable one for the good priest: an accident had delayed the street car service, Father arrived at the Union Depot in time to see his train puffing its way down the labyrinth of tracks out of the yards. He mused but a few moments, he thought of the disappointment of the inmates of the home and promptly called a cab. Phoning the institution that he would be delayed he started in the taxi as soon as possible. The urgency of the trip was evident to the driver and he made it his business to capitalize on that score, driving fully a mile beyond Father Burke's objective with the meter tunefully recording the fare. Father Burke soon realized his mistake and directed the driver to the buildings that could be seen in the offing. Cautioning the fellow to wait till the services were over before making the return trip, Father started to hear confessions, about twenty-five in number, and to celebrate the Mass. The chauffeur was waiting when Father was ready to return to Peoria, but on the conclusion of the trip it was learned that the taxi bill was eight dollars. Father Burke jokingly remarked that he has always felt that the County Farm was aptly dubbed

when it was called a Poor Farm—it would keep one broke to get out there. It is quite different now and St. Mark's pastor or the Assistant cheerfully attend the inmates of the Poor Farm, of whom Christ has said: "We have always with us."

About the time that Father Burke was sent to Peoria there was forming through the east a society that was destined to grow to stupendous proportions. It was the Holy Name Society. It was and is strictly a men and boys Society. With capable and energetic leaders along with the co-operation of the parish priest the membership grew by leaps and bounds. In 1913 Bishop Dunne appointed Father Burke as Diocesan Director. No words of the writer could be as graphic as the *Holy Name Journal*, a Men's National Catholic Monthly, of October, 1913, published in New York. "Good Work in Peoria Diocese." "The phenomenal growth of the Holy Name Society since the establishment in New York more than four years has proved the wisdom of having a central bureau of information. At first confined to the East and to a comparatively limited territory, the Society has grown with amazing rapidity through the country. It is now established in every State in the Union from coast to coast.

"We regret that our limited space does not permit the publication of the statistics of the growth of the Society within the past few years. The Diocese of Peoria, however, furnishes a typical instance of the steady spiritual director. Bishop Dunne of the Peoria Diocese was especially happy in his selection of the Reverend J. J. Burke for the important office. Father Burke, whose modesty keeps him ever in the background, has by his untiring zeal made a record since his appointment which is not surpassed by that of any other spiritual director in the United States. The following list of Holy Name Societies established in the Peoria Diocese within the past few years speaks more eloquently than words of the splendid work accomplished so quietly by this earnest priest." The list was given and it included cities and towns all over the diocese, about one hundred divisions. The division in our parish is still an exceptionally active Society.

ST. MARK'S HALL

Feeling the need in Peoria for a place to which young women engaged in business or other work could come and know the comforts of a "home away from home" Father Burke decided

to build what came to be known as "St. Mark's Hall," a home for working girls. The Sisters of St. Francis of the Immaculate Conception were asked to take charge. The hall was opened in December, 1916, under the direction of Sister Philomena, whom Mother Pacifica had sent with several other nuns to interest girls in the home. In the war years and just after the war, the home flourished: this was a time when a large number of women were finding places for themselves in the business world. It has continued to serve a good purpose all through the years. Sister Philomena was succeeded by Sister Angelina and then by Sister Isabella. In September, 1934, Sister Eugenia came to Peoria from Springfield and she is still in charge.

The hall has accommodations for thirty girls. Room and board, laundry facilities, and the use of several large rooms for recreation, are provided for at a reasonable sum. It is on a street car line and has the advantage of being on the Bluff, but not too far from town for walking, if one desires. Those that stay at the hall find that it has the privacy of a hotel with the atmosphere of a home. The hall is not intended for Catholics alone, all those who have the proper recommendations are welcome. Catholics find it an advantage to be across the street from a church



ST. MARK'S CONVENT



ST. MARK'S HALL

Convent and St. Mark's Hall

and to be able to enjoy the use of a chapel under their own roof.

From the time that the United States entered the conflict known to this generation as the World War, until the Armistice in 1918, training camps were maintained all over the country. What is now the Manual Arts section of Bradley Polytechnic College served as temporary barracks for one of such camps in the Peoria area. Being in close proximity to St. Mark's it fell to the pastor to do what he felt that he could for the men quartered at this place. While this was not arduous work, it nevertheless meant an added duty for Father Burke.

Early in 1919 the Most Reverend Bishop asked Father Burke, who was now an irremovable Rector to reorganize the financial management of the Guardian Angel Orphanage. For some time the Orphanage had been running into debt. No semblance of self-support was maintained and this greatly distressed the good Bishop. Father Burke with keen precision contacted the parents, relatives, or guardians of the children at the institution with a thought in mind that they be made coöoperators in the financing if at all possible. This plan worked out very well and in a few years, the new arrangement was functioning harmoniously on a self-supporting basis. The

Sisters of St. Francis of the Immaculate Conception were in charge and are at the present time. Since that time many new improvements have been made, a gymnasium has been remodeled and a school, the Edmund M. Dunne, has been erected to the honor of the Bishop who spent so much of his time and personal means for the good of the Orphanage.

The needs of a growing parish convinced Father Burke of the necessity of building a new church, or remodeling the old edifice. The latter procedure was decided upon and the work was begun in 1920. Charles Wall, whose good father is still a faithful attendant at St. Mark's, was the contractor in charge. The dimensions were made true to Gothic proportions, the capacity was doubled and the expense of the remodeling was twice the cost of the original construction. Shortly after this, Father Burke installed the high altar and chancel rail of imported pure carrara marble. Later the side altars were donated to match the main altar. In contrast to this calm beauty are statues in colors of the Sacred Heart, St. Mark, a life-size Crucifix and beautiful Stations of the Cross, that are placed in proper setting outside the rail.

About this time St. Mark's parish was furnished with a young assistant, Reverend Joseph

Gordon, now of Princeville, Ill. By his earnest efforts he lightened the burdens of a large parish for Father Burke. St. Mark's assistant had the new outmission of Pottstown, Ill., to administer. During the year Father Burke saw to the erection of a modest frame church adequate to the needs of this small mining town, four miles from Peoria. Like to Maxwell, the duties were not so hard unless climatic conditions rendered the road impassable. Within the past few years a fine concrete pavement has been laid that passes through the little village.

Father Burke had long cherished the idea of a Community Center for the West Bluff. He hoped to interest the young men and women of our city in good, clean, wholesome amusements that could be had without going down into the business section. Two sites near the church property were available, with adequate frontage for later development. After conferring with a called committee, it was decided that the parish would build a new school and auditorium with ample equipment for the social needs of St. Mark's parish and for outside groups if they cared to avail themselves of them. The cost of construction was prohibitive for a swimming pool and in the light of events that followed shortly afterward, the post war inflation, and "the eco-

nomic depression" of the past four or five years, it was providential that the Parish did not attempt the building of the Center.

ST. MARK'S SCHOOL

Steady growth has attended any plan that Monsignor Burke has attempted. Soon plans were drawn for the new school and hall. The site chosen for its erection was the half block, cross cornered from the church and directly across from St. Mark's Hall, residence hall for women. The school was to face on Bradley Avenue and the auditorium had its entrance on South Underhill. The approximate cost of the completed joint buildings, was \$100,000. Built of brick with Bedford stone trimmings, it is one of the finest grade schools in the State outside of Chicago, Ill. It is modern in every particular: equipped with radios in each room, a large kitchen for serving hot meals to the children and all parish social affairs, showers, and gymnasium equipment, and an auditorium with theater appointments and properties. In the school proper a suite for clinical examinations is found to be expedient. The parochial health nurses, doctors and dentists are high in their praise of the school arrangement. The curriculum includes eight grades of work according to State requirements.

It is a fine monument to the untiring interest of Monsignor Burke.

One cannot follow a line of endeavor serving mankind without acquiring enemies as well as friends. There are always those in this world who expect you to bow to their gods. That Father Burke has never had to lower his colors is a known fact, that his word is as good as his bond was demonstrated forcibly at the time of the building of the new school. The method followed for raising funds with which to build was the usual one—solicitation of pledges, etc. After the parish had been covered and the different contracts had been let, a wealthy parishioner, Mr. XYZ—who had pledged \$1,000, tried to coerce the good priest. He offered to make up the difference between a higher bid and the lower contract bid for one of the supplies needed in the construction, if Father would give the contract to the company that XYZ favored. Father Burke did not question the evident ulterior motive of his parishioner, nor did he change his demeanor at the threatened loss of the pledge which Mr. XYZ informed the priest that he would withdraw if Father would not acquiesce. Our good pastor firmly refused to break his word. He has never felt that he could afford to violate his temper or lose his self-control by per-

sonal contentions. XYZ was one of those people whom it was impossible to hate or to respect greatly. His affections were warm, his spirits were lively, his passions strong and his principles weak. He was not extremely intelligent and one could not be seriously angry with him. Father did not receive the pledge of \$1,000, but he still could maintain the standard of honesty that had always been his. "His word is his bond."

Several months after this occurrence the pledges were not coming in as had been promised, Father remonstrated with his flock. He left to them the alternative of paying promptly or he would indefinitely stop work on the building of the school until he had the requisite amount to assure its completion. This admonition did not clarify matters and after the roof was on the building the construction was halted for some months. The writer remembers well the reaction to the procedure. Our children were just entering the grades and our personal feelings were about the same as sentiments that were entertained by the majority of parishioners. For those that had kept faith it made a hardship; however, we were not as well acquainted with the wisdom, sagacity, nor with the powers of a diplomat that were possessed by our beloved Monsignor. As the years have gone by we can see the wisdom

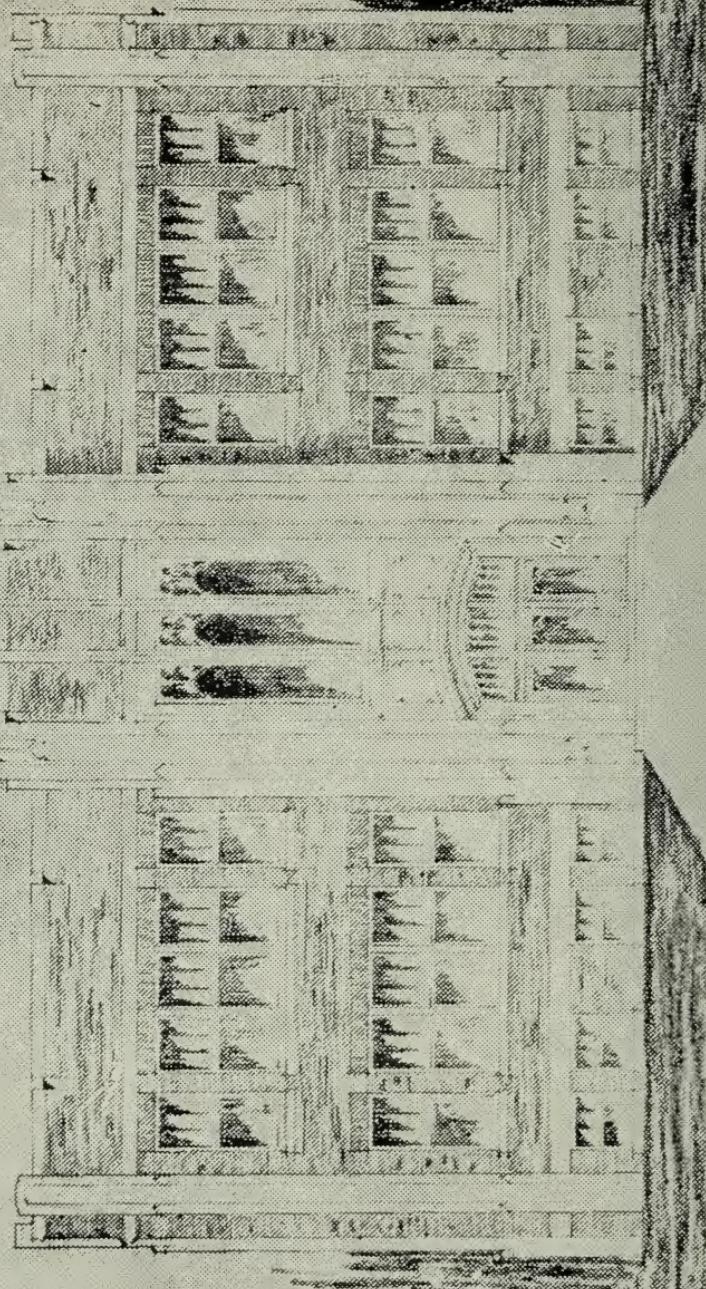
of his ways. An institution needs money to operate and often the generosity of those who could give abundantly depends on the amount of pressure that is put upon them in this regard; however, Father Burke has the happy faculty of assuaging the pain of monetary separation in church support with the least talk about the matter of any pastor that it has been my pleasure to know. Once a year and no more, his flock are given a sermon on financing and their obligation regarding the same, and the plan seems to please his people, for they work harmoniously with his ideas. Another thing that the writer feels should be mentioned is the fact that if the parishioner is not able to uphold his part in the parish obligations, Monsignor has not been known to make that parishioner feel the embarrassment. We of the laity feel that an intensive course in tact and business acumen for priests would be a helpful addition to the Seminary curriculum. One might also add a course in the Charity that surpasses understanding. Let us always remember that such characteristics are embodied in our good Monsignor.

We of Peoria could not readily forget good Father Jeremiah Donovan, who served for eighteen years as chaplain of the Guardian Angel Orphanage. True to a quotation of Webster:

"He possessed that quality of humor that flowed from the natural disposition of the man."

He was a few years older than Father Burke, and of a different temperament entirely, but he maintained a high regard for our pastor. Father "Jerry," as many of his colleagues called him, was a brilliant speaker, and he was often invited to speak at our parish functions. Always convincing us of the comradely relation between the ridiculous and the sublime, he kept the searchlight of comedy at work. On one occasion he closed his talk with a joke on Father Burke, by saying, "There were two things that Father Burke never told: one was his age and the other was the amount that he received in the Christmas collection." Father Donovan passed away July 31, 1932, at St. Francis Hospital. Had he lived undoubtedly he would have written a book on the life of Monsignor Burke, for he repeatedly urged that our pastor be emulated and that his judgment be relied upon.

Two years before the building of the school in 1922 Father Burke organized the Mothers' Club, the first club of this kind in the Peoria Parochial Schools. The club is comparable to the Parent-Teacher Association of the Public School System and has for its aim a coöperation between the parents and teachers for the betterment of



the children. Whenever they deemed it advisable and necessary the club collaborated with the local associations on civic projects. They have assumed charge of the hot lunch problem and school books for the needy, and they sponsor the annual parish supper. Mrs. Duane, wife of Dr. Joseph Duane, was the first President of the club.

For sometime St. Mark's supported the activities of a Boy Scout and Girl Scout Troop, men and women of the parish became interested in the movement and entered training classes for the executive part of the work. Charles Merkel, Thomas O'Brien, Leo F. Donovan, George Grimm and Paul Bourscheidt were responsible for quite a bit of recognition that St. Mark's Troop received. A change in the personnel at the Local Scout Headquarters was primarily the reason for the lagging interest in the Scout movement in the parochial schools and the Troops at St. Mark's were finally disbanded. There is a movement on foot now to supplant this form of activity with a more modern society that is meeting with great success through the East, the Catholic Boys' Brigade.

About this time the Irish Cause was receiving much attention here and abroad. Mary McSweeney, sister of Terence, who died as a result of a hunger strike in Ireland, came to America to

arouse public sympathy and to further the sale of bonds that were issued to finance the cause. Forums were organized in many places by sympathizers. In Peoria meetings were held at the Knights of Columbus Hall. The late Judge John M. Neihaus spoke for the bond issue at one of those meetings. Father Burke was serving as President of the local Forum. Later, at a meeting in Chicago, which Father attended, recommendations were drafted to be sent to the United States Senate. After recognition of the Irish Free State came from that body, the credit for the groundwork could well be given to this group.

Some of the extra activities that held interest and created a real parish spirit at St. Mark's was the personal appearance of such nationally known figures as Dr. Fulton Sheen, D.D., Ph.D., Quinn O'Brien, Cathal O'Bryne and our own well-loved Dr. John A. O'Brien.

Dr. Fulton Sheen, brilliant orator, thrills the radio audience each Sunday evening over the Red Network on The Catholic Hour. He is an internationally known writer. In 1922 he gave his celebrated lecture on evolution to a capacity audience at St. Mark's Hall: "The Man in the Tree or the Man on the Tree." It was enthusiastically received.

Cathal O'Byrne, native of Ireland, has spoken twice at St. Mark's. He dresses in Irish costume and his discourse scintillates with ready Irish wit.

Quinn O'Brien, one of the finest legal lights in the city of Chicago, spoke at the Hall in 1925 as a guest of the Holy Name Society.

Dr. John A. O'Brien needs no introduction to Peorians, and especially to our parish. He was reared in St. Patrick's parish, but the family moved within close proximity of St. Mark's after the death of his father in 1916. Following his ordination he was appointed student chaplain in charge of the Newman Foundation at the University of Illinois since its beginning in 1918. He has been a direct influence for good among the young students of all denominations, and this can be realized more fully than writing can tell you, if one has had access to the large number of non-Catholic students that have enrolled in the religion classes that he teaches and supervises. He has found time to write books of an educational nature. Among these are many of the texts that are used in our Parochial schools. He delivered a series of Lenten lectures at St. Mark's a few years ago; also that same year he was invited to give a course of instructive religious addresses at Bradley College. These subjects in

both instances were Catholic beliefs that are often assailed by non-Catholics.

Marking his forty-fifth anniversary in the priesthood and his twentieth year as pastor of St. Mark's Church, Father Burke was presented with beautiful golden vestments at a jubilee fête tendered him by the parishioners in St. Mark's Hall on Wednesday, December 3, 1930.

The occasion was marked by the presence of the Most Reverend Joseph H. Schlarman, Bishop of Peoria, and the hall was packed to capacity. It was sponsored by the Ladies' Altar Society and the Holy Name Society.

Bishop Schlarman paid a beautiful tribute to the life and personality of the beloved pastor in a talk following the presentation of the vestments.

"He is a man who diffuses good, and obliterates himself in unselfish service," the Bishop said. "His good works have benefited the parish and the whole city."

The Bishop referred to the beautiful vestments as typifying the pageantry of the Church and eliminating personality. Vestments are worn by priests just as gowns are worn by justices of the Supreme Court, he said, by way of explaining their purpose.

Other speakers on the program were former assistants of Father Burke in Bloomington, and

his early days here. The talks were embellished with wit and recalled humorous incidents in the life of Father Burke. The jubilee was presided over by Charles F. Merkel, President of the Holy Name Society.

"Father Burke has worked hard and with the help of the parish has accomplished much." Mr. Merkel said in reviewing the pastor's work here.

Father J. F. Donovan, retired chaplain of Guardian Angel Orphanage, who observed his Golden Jubilee recently assured Father Burke that "he would make it to a golden anniversary too," with only five years to go.

Presentation of the vestments was made by Mrs. W. J. Fanning, President of the Ladies' Altar Society of the church. The vestments were imported from Germany and are among the most beautiful in the country.

Father Burke, visibly touched, spoke a few words of thanks to all the parish. He said that he would wear the vestments for the first time at Christmas services at St. Mark's. He added that he appreciated them more than any other gift that the parish might have made.

Vestments included: Cope, dalmatics, two stoles, maniple, burse and veil.

Children of the school and the Knights of Columbus presented huge baskets of flowers.

The stage was beautifully decorated. Music was furnished by the Spalding orchestra and special solo numbers interspersed. Following the presentation there was a reception.

Bishop Dunne placed Father Burke on the board of consultors, also made him a member of the board of examiners of the clergy, in 1911. This is one of the most important boards in the diocese. He continued to be a member of one of these boards until 1933, when on account of increasing work in the parish he requested to be relieved.

The Holy Name Society of St. Mark's is one of the largest and most active in the diocese.

During the years of plenty the charitable organizations were busily engaged caring for the needy, but the few past years of the economic depression put a tremendous burden upon these different groups. The Catholic Charities were organized here in 1925. A group of nuns came here from the East to assume charge of the social service and to work in conjunction with the Catholic Women's League and kindred societies that had been doing such excellent work along this line for years. Shortly after these nuns took up residence at St. Mark's Hall, a technicality of Canon Law forced the disbanding of the order. Sister Del Carmel, one of the group here, and an

energetic and capable worker, then entered the novitiate of the Dominican Order at Springfield, Ill. This order then took charge of the relief work in this city and through the diocese. Sisters Margaret Mary, Gonzales, Gertrude, Ernestine and Del Carmel were the band that opened the new convent, a gift of the bishop on North Monroe Street, where they remained until 1932. The headquarters for the Catholic Charities are now maintained at that address. Reverend Fathers Charles Williams, Thomas Harrison and Edward Farrell were respectively appointed diocesan directors of charities. As the economic conditions gradually grew worse our good bishop realized the expediency of soliciting State and Federal aid for the many Catholic needy, and a budget was submitted. It was at this time that Bishop Schlarman organized the nationally known St. Vincent de Paul Society all over the diocese for this work. This meant a move for the Sisters that was keenly felt by all at first; however, the coördinated groups of the St. Vincent de Paul Society have silently functioned so well that they deserve much praise as does the far-sightedness of our good Bishop. The St. Mark's division is under the leadership of Eugene Buck, President. This man with no family of his own to give him a graphic picture of the needs of

such, labors early and late, and so silently, for the good of Peoria Catholic poor in our own parish.

The usher group instructed and listed by Frank Eynatten and Ray Brons is another parish arrangement that has assisted Father Burke with the duties along this line. Since the envelope system has been put into operation some of the members of this group have assumed the auditing of the collections of Sundays and Holydays.

INVESTITURE

On arriving at Sacred Heart Sanitarium, Milwaukee, where Father Burke had gone for a short rest, he learned of the great honor that had come to him and to his parish through him. The Peoria Chancery had received notice September 20, 1931, from Rome, of his elevation to a Monsignorship. Plans were made for the investiture that took place November 3, 1931, in St. Mark's Church. The day before the ceremony the Peoria *Journal Transcript* carried a comprehensive covering of the event. The following is the article written by Ray Flaherty of the editorial staff:

"Crowning forty-seven years of distinguished service in the priesthood the Right Reverend Monsignor J. J. Burke, beloved pastor of St. Mark's Church for more than twenty years, and

a dominant figure in civic affairs, will be invested as a domestic prelate to His Holiness Pope Pius XI at an impressive Solemn High Mass at 10:30 o'clock Tuesday, November 3rd, in St. Mark's Church.

"Investiture of this honor which comes as reward for long and outstanding service to his church and its people will be by His Excellency Joseph H. Schlarman, Bishop of Peoria.

BISHOP TO GIVE THE SERMON

"Celebrant of the Solemn High Mass will be Reverend J. F. Fitzpatrick, of Rock Island, who was the first young man to be ordained to the priesthood from St. Patrick's parish in Bloomington, while Father Burke was pastor there. The deacon for the Mass will be Reverend A. F. Timmins, of Rutland, who was Father Burke's first assistant at Bloomington, and the subdeacon will be Reverend Joseph Gordon, former assistant at St. Mark's. The Reverend J. J. Kerrins, present assistant at St. Mark's, will be master of ceremonies, assisted by the Reverend E. Kelly, Father Burke's second assistant at St. Mark's. The Bishop's chaplains will be the Reverend M. O'Callahan, who succeeded the new Monsignor at St. Patrick's at Bloomington, and the Reverend J. Francis, of Streator, who too was ordained as priest from the Bloomington parish while Father Burke was there. The Reverend T. J. Jordan, of St. Mary's Cathedral, will read the papal bull, the official document from the Pope designating

Father Burke as a Monsignor. The Bishop will deliver the sermon.

"Several Monsignors, including the Very Reverend Gerald T. Bergan, Vicar General of the diocese (now Bishop of Des Moines, Iowa), the Right Reverend Ladislas Bobkiewicz of St. Hyacinth Church, LaSalle, and the Right Reverend Frederick Gahlman of St. Joseph, Peoria, as domestic prelates, and more than seventy-five priests of the diocese and other states will attend the services.

"Delegations from St. Patrick's, Bloomington, Avon and St. Augustine will be here to attend the elevation.

"Father Burke's brother Thomas of Chicago, his sister Sadie of Peoria, a cousin Edward, and daughter Eva of St. Augustine, a nephew, Dr. Thomas J. Burke, and his sister Katherine, a teacher in the public schools of Chicago, will be present.

GRAND OUTDOOR PARADE

"Twenty to thirty members of the Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus in full dress uniform and carrying swords will act as a guard of honor for the occasion. Arrangements for this guard are being made by Charles F. Merkel, President of the Holy Name Society, which Father Burke organized in the parish.

"Marking the happiest occasion in the history of the parish there will be a grand outdoor procession preceding the Mass. This procession will move from St. Mark's Hall and will proceed eastward on Bradley Avenue for a block, thence

returning on the north side of the street to the church. The procession will be headed by altar boys carrying a large crucifix and candles. Fifty altar boys in white surplices will follow and then the visiting priests followed by the Monsignori, celebrant of the Mass, Father Burke and the Bishop. Fourteen little pages, wearing satin uniforms of gold and white, the papal colors, will carry the Bishop's train and form the last of the procession.

"St. Mark's choir, under the direction of Walter Mulvaney, with Mrs. Howard T. Gavin, the organist, will sing a special Mass.

"Actual investiture of the new honor will come after the Gospel. The papal brief will be read from the pulpit, first in Latin, then in English. The Bishop will then bless the rochet or surplice and mantelletta or cape of the new Monsignor's beautiful purple robes and will place them upon him. The sermon will follow.

"Following the Mass the new Monsignor will be honored at a banquet for the clergy at the Hotel Pere Marquette. A reception in his honor will be given Sunday in St. Mark's Hall. Children of the school surprised Father Burke with a special program on Friday and presented him with a purse.

"A Monsignorship is an honor of distinction rather than an office. To merit the title which established the recipient as a 'prelate in the household of the Pope,' a priest must have a record of long years of outstanding distinguished service to his church and its people.

"More than duplicating his great record in the 'famous forty acres' at Bloomington, in St. Patrick's parish there, characterized by many priests as his greatest monument and one of the greatest undertakings in the history of the diocese, Father Burke has made improvements at St. Mark's totaling \$300,000, giving the parish here one of the finest properties of any church in the diocese.

"Possessing a rare knowledge of architecture and building Father Burke has enjoyed undertaking one difficult project after another. An untiring worker, he gave close attention to all building work and through his administrative ability and emphasis on essentials he succeeded in getting the finest of building for the lowest cost.

"Keenly interested in the teaching of the young, Father Burke has provided St. Mark's with every modern facility and the school is maintained at the highest standard. Community entertainments have been fostered and the parish which has a very small debt has been welded into one happy family under the guidance of this spiritual leader.

"And so Father Burke is being honored for outstanding service to his church and its people."

The ceremonies on November 3rd followed the program just quoted. Dr. John A. O'Brien, of the Newman Foundation at Champaign, was the toastmaster at the banquet, which was attended by the visiting clergy.

CHAPTER XII

TALKS—SERMONS—LECTURES

FATHER BURKE was not in Peoria long before he was recognized as a clear thinker, a keen observer and a powerful force for good, and that, not alone in his own parish. He was called upon many times to speak at educational and civic gatherings where men of high caliber and unquestioned integrity were with him on the platform.

The Booklovers' Club, of which Miss Naomi Lagron was president, invited Father to give a discourse before its members in 1923 on that distinguished churchman, Most Reverend Bishop John Lancaster Spalding. Another speaker was invited to eulogize the late Robert Ingersoll on this same program. When Father Burke learned of the plan, he refused to speak, telling the chairman that Spalding was a builder and Ingersoll was a destroyer, that he could not bring himself to such a contrast on the same program. The Committee on Arrangements managed diplomatically to eliminate the Ingersoll defender and Father Burke addressed the gathering. Quotation from the talk he gave will convince you of the caliber of the man speaking and also of the

man spoken of. "Few men of our day have achieved a greater, a more deserved fame than our own Bishop Spalding. His books, his learning and his eloquence have attracted the American people of all denominations who recognized in him the sincere Christian, the broad-minded gentleman, and the true American.

"Bishop Spalding was a many-sided genius, a versatile man. As a churchman his fame was world-wide; as a patriotic citizen he was consulted and honored by a President and those in high places; as an orator he had few superiors; and as a linguist he could converse and preach in several languages; while as a thinker he was as profound as he was prolific.

"Peoria and America owe him a debt of gratitude on account of his benign influence and great work for God and country. His pen and tongue were ever urging to high thinking and right living; a worker not a dreamer, a Man of God not a time server, a seeker after truth—not popularity."

More than one-half of his life was spent in Peoria. He loved Peoria with a true genuine affection. During his forty years' residence here he was always foremost in every good work for the city and its citizens. He said at one time, "If Peoria is dear to us, it is not for its beautiful site,

its healthful climate, but for the spirit of freedom, of good will, of helpfulness and for the opportunity which is given here to all to follow after the better things of which faith and hope are the heralds."

In a material way, Bishop Spalding did much for Peoria and the surrounding country. He was instrumental in the erection of numerous churches, colleges, academies, schools, homes, asylums and hospitals for the care and cure of ills, to which human flesh is heir. Spalding Institute at Peoria, the Catholic University at Washington, D. C., and many other educational institutions will long remain as monuments to his zeal for education.

Bishop Spalding's writings are models of beautiful and noble thoughts expressed in fitting language. His work, *Socialism, Labor and Arguments*, show the great sympathy for the labor movement of the enlightened churchman whom President Theodore Roosevelt selected to settle the great Anthracite Coal Strike.

Bishop Spalding, churchman, patriot, philosopher and man of letters, was a true servant of God, disinterested and unselfish in his own work for the good of humanity.

Civic authorities esteemed Father Burke and respected his judgment. A few years ago the

Greater Peoria Sanitary District proposed the building of a sewage disposal plant to be financed by a two million dollar bond issue. Public meetings under the auspices of the Citizens' Committee of 1,400 were held all over the city previous to the election. Father Burke spoke over radio station WMBD as a member of this committee. The *Peoria Star's* comment on the speech was headlined thus:

"‘Sanitary Gospel Broadcasted: The Issue Discussed.’ One of the most unusual and most eloquent appeals for a healthful city ever made in Peoria was delivered last evening by the Reverend J. J. Burke of St. Mark’s Church. He said a turning point in the existence of Peoria is at hand. Will she return to the right now and follow the road traveled by the progressive cities of our State?

"All of us are vitally interested in everything that benefits, elevates and enhances the interests of our good city, morally, intellectually and physically. We have one of the best, the most beautiful and what should be the most healthful cities in the country. It is ideally located for residence, for business and for pleasure. Peoria is destined to become one of the most important cities of the Middle West, if the citizens do their part, and they can do their part by voting for the bond issue.

"Tomorrow evening a public meeting of the

Citizens' Committee will be held in the auditorium of the Central High School. E. V. Champion will act as chairman with Reverend J. J. Burke and Murray M. Baker and H. M. Whitlock (President of the Peoria School Inspectors) as speakers."

The bond issue carried, the plant was built and Father Burke officiated at the dedicatory services of a splendid project that will protect the health and happiness of the community. It was accomplished without additional taxes. We had already voted \$160,000 a year for sanitary purposes which annual payment in time will liquidate the \$2,415,000 bonds.

Monsignor Burke spoke this year, 1935, during Education Week over WMBD. The context of that talk is as follows: "'Enriching Character Through Education' is the subject assigned to me by the Committee on American Education Week. It is a timely and important subject. Many evils result from overlooking the necessity of character training. It may be interesting to define what is meant by character and how it can be trained, adorned and enriched by education.

"Character may be defined as a mark of what a person is. Thus if we say a person is one of good character, we mean that he is a person of moral excellence. Now the two essential ele-

ments in forming character are religious and moral training.

"Knowledge alone is not education. True education consists in training all of a person's faculties—mental, moral and physical.

"Morality is the basis of society and good government. A spirit of incredulity and viciousness pervades everywhere. Notwithstanding our wide diffusion of learning, crime is on the increase, irreligion is too often crowned with worldly success, while much corruption appears in public places. There can be no stable government without justice, no justice without morality, no morality without religion and no religion without God.

"The atheistic, communistic so-called government of Russia and Mexico are degrading attempts to govern people without God, justice or morality. Communism and atheism are growing in our country. These foul weeds are spreading their roots in the garden of our schools. Should we not awake to the danger before it is too late and begin training our youth more thoroughly in those things that enrich character, form consciences and make honest, honorable, conscientious, manly men?

"Of course Public Schools supported by Jews and Christians of every denomination cannot

teach anything antagonistic to the religious beliefs of their supporters. They can teach that there is a Supreme Being, Whom we must love, serve and adore. I presume that there is no loyal American citizen who would object if the Public Schools taught children to love God and keep His Commandments. Faith in God has civilized and Christianized every country in the world. It animated Columbus in the discovery of this country, that atheism would destroy.

"With feelings of admiration and respect and love for our country and her flag in the minds of our youth, religion and love of God in their heart, we may fear neither atheism, anarchy, communism, bolshevism, nor any other evil that may assail us."

Another lecture that received favorable comment by the press was a lengthy treatise on the Passion of Our Lord: "At the Foot of the Cross."

The last few paragraphs could well be considered as being prophetically significant to our days; the address was given in 1929. He says: "After considering the trials and afflictions of our merciful Savior ending in His excruciatingly painful death for us, will we not endeavor to bear our trials patiently for Him and with Him? Not only our country but the whole world is now passing through a Gethsemane of desolation and

depression, a Jerusalem of trials, and a Golgotha of suffering and sorrow. But a light appears in the distance. Hope for better things seems near fulfillment. There will be a glorious resurrection for an afflicted people. Easter joys will follow Calvary's sadness.

"Let us pray that America may soon arise from the depression of Calvary and from the gloom of the tomb. As Abraham asked God not to punish the cities on the plains on account of the sins of many of the inhabitants, let us ask Our Heavenly Father to forgive everyone and to grant to our glorious country a full measure of peace, progress and prosperity."

At a St. Patrick's Day gathering several years ago Father Burke voiced his passionate zeal for a cemented union of religion and patriotism. While we are speaking of a few of the many inspiring talks, lectures, sermons and addresses that the good priest has given at different times during his life this mingling of the spiritual and temporal that he has had the happy faculty to possess should be mentioned. "Love of God and love of country go hand in hand. They are closely related. He loves his country best and keeps her laws the best who does so for God's sake. Patriotism is a part of religion. They are inseparable."

During the year 1935 the School Board pro-

posed a Peoria schoolbook rental system. A criticism of this proposal was voiced in a letter written to the *Journal Transcript*, March 1, 1935, by Monsignor Burke which I will repeat for you here in its entirety:

TO THE EDITOR,

The Journal Transcript:

As a citizen of our country for three-quarters of a century, as a Peorian for one-third of that time, I desire to utter a protest against the action of the Superintendent of our schools and the Board of Education in voting to tax all our citizens \$75,000 or \$100,000 to purchase and rent books to the children of a portion of the taxpayers.

I say our Superintendent, because it has not been heard that he entered a protest.

I protest, first, because it is unjust;

Second, because it is impractical;

Third, because it is un-American.

1. It is unjust and unfair to make Bill Jones and John McCarthy buy books for John Rockefeller and J. P. Morgan's children. Why not tax them to buy shoes and clothing for them?

2. It is impractical because many of those able to pay would refuse to pay the rent, arguing that they were already taxed for the books. It would be but a step to the socialistic idea of buying books for all the children. In every school books are given to the poor, the renting would end, in giving them to all, thus pauperizing them.

3. It is un-American because it would be taxing one-sixth of our people to pay for books of five-sixths, while one-sixth would not be given the opportunity of using the books for which they are taxed. Is not this taxation without representation?

Some say the bookseller charges too much for books. It is said that the grocer, the clothier and the shoe dealer charge too much, but you do not tax the people to pay for these things.

The writer is not one in authority, nor in business, but is one who believes in justice, fair play and true Americanism.

MONSIGNOR J. J. BURKE.

A concrete example of the work of Monsignor Burke can be fully appreciated by the following summation. During the fifty years of his priesthood he has had to his credit the collection of funds for the erection of fourteen ecclesiastical buildings:

- 5 Churches,
- 3 Rectories,
- 3 Convents,
- 2 Schools,
- 1 Residence Hall for Business Women.

While engaged in this material work he did not neglect his spiritual duties. All of his parishes were well organized having:

- Altar Societies,

Holy Name Societies,
Children of Mary,
Mothers' Club.

During his pastorates he has seldom missed a day celebrating Holy Mass except when on the ocean, where there were no facilities for the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice. The approximate amount of his spiritual duties will aggregate:

20,000 Masses,
200,000 Confessions,
1,600 Baptisms,
600 Funerals,
800 Marriages,
300 Converts.

From the various parishes ten young men have become priests and 20 young women have received the habit in different religious orders. Among them are:

Father Fitzpatrick, Sacred Heart Church, Rock Island.

Father Bennet, S.J., deceased.

Father Norris, C.S.C., Notre Dame (teacher).

Father J. Frances, St. Mary's Church, Streator.

St. John's, Milk Grove, Ill.; St. Patrick's, Bloomington, Ill.; St. Mary's, Downs, Ill., and St. Francis, Pottstown, Ill., were the churches

collected for and erected where before there had not been a church.

Besides fulfilling his duty to his fellow man in this exemplary work, besides following the orders of his superiors, think of the privilege that was afforded our good pastor for his own sanctification. No wonder his radiant goodness has seemed to us a Divine reflection. He has lived intimately with Christ.

In the petty trials of life he has been pliant and gracious, convincing us that prayer is easy, works of charity attractive, but the acceptance of trials and the overcoming of grievances demand persistent effort to draw grace and perseverance adequate to such a battle.

The good Monsignor has been very fortunate in having very able young assistants, yet he has always assumed the major part of the parish work. These young priests who should have their share of credit in St. Mark's success are: Reverend Father Joseph A. Gordon of Princeville, Ill. The writer has known this cleric many years. Our high school days were started together at St. Mary's in Champaign, Ill. He is a quiet but very able young man and St. Mark's regretted to lose him when the Bishop made the change. Father Gordon was succeeded by Reverend Father Edward Kelley, now pastor at Pen-

field, Ill. Father Kelley was an earnest worker with the Holy Name Society. At this time "get-togethers" were held in the homes to stimulate interest in the society dedicated to purity of speech. The Executive Board that met at these gatherings were John Niehaus, Jr., Joseph Bartley, Charles Motsett, Charles Merkel, Thomas O'Brien, Leo F. Donovan, Daniel Toberty, George Grimm, Paul Bourscheidt, Joseph R. Downs, Joseph Murphy.

Reverend Father James J. Kerrins, now of Ashkum, Ill., a bright young priest, followed Father Kelley. The praise due this assistant should not fall short of his predecessors. He had that kind, warm-heartedness that makes for friends. The sick especially knew his beneficence. His fine, full voice and his performance on the violin added to the beauty of church services.

Reverend Father Lyford Kern followed next. He remained at St. Mark's for one year, being then transferred to the Peoria Chancery. Father Kern was an accomplished musician. One will not soon forget the Seven Last Words, by the St. Mark's choir under his direction, Good Friday, 1933. He is now in charge of the clergy choir. Having completed a course of study in Gregorian Music, Bishop Schlarman appointed Father Kern Musical Director at St. Mary's Cathedral, Peoria.

Reverend Father John F. Crowley was the fifth assistant at our parish. Athletically inclined, he was dearly loved by the young. His previous experience in athletics rendered him a valuable asset to the parish Catholic Youths' Organization groups. He was transferred during the winter of 1935 as assistant to the Vicar General, Monsignor Durkin, at St. Joseph's Church, Rock Island, Ill. His successor is the present assistant, Reverend Father J. Prokuski, who has already assumed his share of parish burdens.

CHAPTER XIII

EULOGY

MONSIGNOR BURKE

THE life of a priest is lonely and it is hard for one of the laity to keep up a steady illustrative flow of anecdotes and reminiscences when writing a narrative of his life. We cannot do justice to the intense reality and instant conviction of their truth that is evident when interviewing them.

It is easy to misrepresent the character and personality of such a saintly person. Often the basic principles of his genius, the apparent fundamental reasons for his uniqueness, are lost because we cannot bridge the gap between the human and the saintly natures; therefore it is possible to write long and unconvincingly. We seem to stress the human side before we consider how far they surpass us in spiritual achievement. It is hard for us to live on the "cold heights of the sublime—the thin air stifles," and we find it invigorating to feel the warm friendly attraction of the man who reminds us that we are his brothers.

Monsignor Burke's life is not too great nor too profound to be beyond the wisdom of the humblest. He is beloved by all for what we feel that he has in common with us, coupled with his high

eminence that he keeps in the background. For this high eminence that he has attained, we do not affect the least contempt, we only wish it were higher. His work attests that he was of those bred in the best traditions of the human spirit.

Unless we are willing to make our life a sacrifice, serving mankind, we are very apt to die without distinction. Monsignor has been lavish in spending his life and talents for his fellow man. He has given them a broader vision and a keener sense of hope and achievement. In this development he has used no hard set rule, no analytical exactness, but rather employed a suasion within the reaches of men wherein they found themselves honest and honorable.

To command others one must have firmness and impartiality as essentials; for the human mind has infinite resources of resisting the introduction of knowledge. Monsignor has been a gentleman of breeding, so charming, that to command was neither born of severity nor was it of a domineering quality. He possessed the plastic power of cohesion and direction. Though not conscious of instinctive artistic powers, there was a perfect blending of balance, proportion, judgment, harmony and faithfulness to the duties of his walk in life, with a marked loyalty to a cause and always moving on a high plane of conduct.

Life to him has never been monotony and rules of behavior and useless restrictions; so despite the dual rôle that life plays of lights and shadows, he has made existence seem to us as it has always been to him, satisfying and beautiful.

Since the purpose of life is not only happiness, but perfection, Monsignor has preached a sane balance between lofty reasoning and a great capacity for the frailty of human nature; he reconciles faults with the ordinary probabilities of living. He has made spiritual progress easier for us because he seldom gets far from everyday realities. Preaching with equal fervor to large and small audiences, bringing a deeper sense of peace and happiness by his ardent application of religious faith to daily occurrences.

Excellent financier and achieving much success as a builder of churches and schools he has proceeded through the years with the conspicuous lack of ostentation to mark his tenacity of purpose and his intense resolve; at the same time preaching significant lessons on the vanity of honors and the trivial preoccupations of such nonessentials. That his services will be rewarded by a hearty, generous appreciation seems superfluous to us and immaterial to him, for ambition and vainglory have not been a compelling motive

of his life. He is not known for the conventional pose assumed by some.

Courage and honest faith have woven a fadeless pattern in the tapestry of his life. They are transient reporters of hours of living that have enriched his heart, aiding him to interpret life more intelligently. He possesses an abhorrence for the abstract and in matters of keen human concern, regardless of speculation, "an error is an error."

Enlargement and sobriety on the worth while ideas of the age has been a talent serving him in public and supporting him in his quiet life, giving whatever he has known of disappointment or failure, a decided charm.

Rapidity of decision may be said to be his, though undue haste has never compromised the success of any venture that he attempted. The diligent use of every minute, the faculty to profit from all the opportunities that presented themselves in his daily life is part of the reason for the success of his labors. He marked out no formal path, but he assimilated all that he could of good to perfect his character.

His patent sincerity moulded him into an intelligent consoler, a healer of hidden wounds with no particular skill, except the ready enthusiasm that was contagious. Petty trials or weighty

matters would elicit the same unfailing comfort; and he often responded with readiness in the spending of personal service and personal means to a worthy brother in distress.

He has been subjected to caustic criticism and stinging sarcasm, but to such vindictive attacks he has taken the stand that, to one before the public, attacks often do not come from one's adversaries. Serene in face of threats and indifferent to storms, he has maintained that, "Slander for which no one will accept the responsibility is patently false and unjustified." He has kept the silence that only the just can afford.

So charming has been his relation with his parishioners, gentle yet majestic, peaceful yet forceful, he has poured out his peace to all with a real strength behind the tenderness. He has kept in the ordinary way so devoutly that it has radiated to his people with a compelling admiration.

Indulgent, compassionate, generous, very kind, just, Monsignor has had a special power in guiding children, and he is loved for this trait by all. Surely he feels recompensed, often, to see in upturned innocent young faces the awe mingled with affection that is felt for him.

Patriotism has been an obsession with this good priest and it has had the elastic quality of reaching across the waters to a downtrodden

country where his parents were born. It is well for the young to learn this noble virtue at his hands. The patriotism of men has been sorely tried the past few years. Everything in the civic order seems to be fickle, inconstant, precarious, and the emotions of man alone remain the same. We have received florid phrases and promises instead of actual effort and performance. Life has resolved itself into war, and rest is really reserved for Heaven. With memories of his youth,—of a Confederacy and a distraught national condition years before,—Monsignor Burke can honestly advise the young to "Cherish that spark of celestial fire called Patriotism."

His life has always been above reproach for which his parishioners are justly proud. It is indeed hard for the laity not to draw conclusions about the sincerity of a priest who loves the world and preaches the Cross of Christ. People still believe that a priest's life is not pledged to frivolity out of keeping with his vocation. At the recommendation of his Bishop, he was judged worthy of the distinction by the Pope of the title of Monsignor. He is not egotistical about this, he is deeply grateful for the honor, but he remains the same refined example of practical piety that he always has been. He has been humble so consistently that humbleness ceases to be an ac-

quired characteristic, it is an actual part of him. You, who may be repelled by his dignity, miss much, for his humility, deep and sincere, would attract and hold you.

With his guidance he has taken us above earthly friendships and acquaintances and has urged us to turn our faces toward the sublime heights where one day if we persevere we shall be warmed by the breath of God. He has labored untiringly to cultivate the inner life. In the retirement to his heart he has lived with graceful resignation and he faces the future with repose.

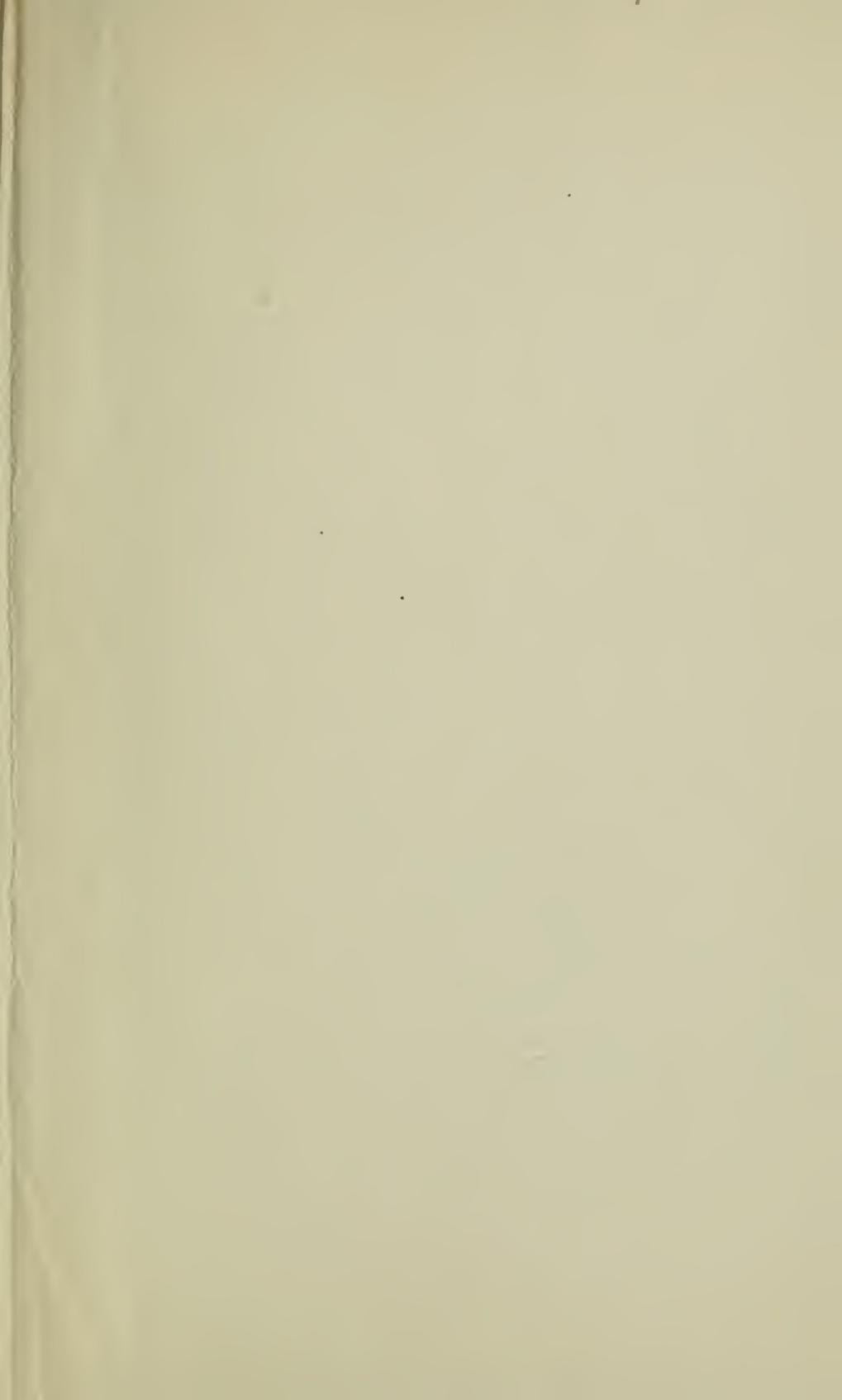
His energy, self-denial, zeal and trust in God has been rewarded by a long life. May his Golden Jubilee, which he will celebrate in June, 1935, be the occasion for recalling all that he has done in the way of permanent good for God and man.

The longer on earth we live
And weigh the various qualities of men
The more we feel the high stern-featured
beauty
Of plain devotedness to Duty
Steadfast and still, not paid with mortal praise
But finding amplest recompense
In Life's ungarlanded expense
In work done squarely and unwasted days.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

40 dk
100
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7 planks



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FIFTY GOLDEN YEARS IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS



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